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Anne, Countess of Sunderland
Second Daughter of John,
Duke of Marlborough.
From a Miniature in Enamel
in the Possession of Earl Spencer.
Engraved by W. Bond.

MEMOIRS

OF

JOHN DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH,

WITH HIS

ORIGINAL CORRESPONDENCE:

COLLECTED FROM

THE FAMILY RECORDS AT BLENHEIM,

AND

OTHER AUTHENTIC SOURCES.

ILLUSTRATED WITH

PORTRAITS, MAPS, AND MILITARY PLANS.

By WILLIAM COXE, M.A. F.R.S. F.S.A.
ARCHDEACON OF WILTS.

SECOND EDITION.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

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MEMOIRS, &c.

CHAPTER 100.

1711.

Arrival of Marlborough at the Hague.—His irksome and humiliating situation.—Progress of the secret negotiation between France and England.—Preparations for the campaign.—Counter preparations of the french.—Domestic occurrences in England.—Embarrassments and declining influence of the new ministry.—Harley and St. John court Marlborough.—Correspondence with Harley.—Attacks against the financial administration of Godolphin in parliament.—Statement of the committee of inquiry on the abuses in the disposal of public money.—Attempt of Guiscard to assassinate Harley.—Its effects in favour of the ministry.—Illness and sudden death of the emperor Joseph.—Charles becomes head of the house of Austria, and candidate for the throne of the empire.—Jealousies excited against the increasing power of the house of Austria.—The allies support the cause of Charles.—Correspondence.—Opening of the campaign.—Lines of defence constructed by marshal Villars.—Marlborough joins the army.—Military movements and correspondence.—Derangement in the plans of the confederate generals, occasioned by the death of the emperor.—Interview and separation of Eugene and Marlborough.—The German forces drawn to the Rhine.—Military manœuvres of the two armies.—Camp of Marlborough on the plains of Lens.

NOTWITHSTANDING these multiplied causes of disgust and disquietude, Marlborough took leave of

the queen, with every testimony of respect and duty, and of the ministers with every external mark of courtesy and complacency. He reached the Hague on the 4th of March, and presented to the States a letter from the queen, in which she renewed her former professions of confidence in his zeal and services, and expressed her resolution to promote the interest of the common cause.

He was, however, now placed in a situation far different from that in which he had appeared on preceding occasions. Hitherto he was the organ of government, and one of the plenipotentiaries, to whom were confided the secrets of the negotiation; and was considered as the prime mover of the political machine. But at this time, he came only to exhibit a phantom of his former authority, and was officially excluded even from the slightest glimpse of that clandestine intercourse, which was passing between England and France; though he could not be unacquainted with the general tendency of such dishonourable dealings.

We have already hinted at the overtures of Louis to the secret counsellors of the queen, even before they had been introduced into administration. The first insinuation was made in July, through the channel of Gualtier, an obscure priest, who had formerly been chaplain to marshal Tallard, when french ambassador in London, and who, after his departure, had officiated in the chapel of the imperial minister. He privately made oral communications to the earl of Jersey, whose wife was a roman catholic, and who was himself strongly attached to the tory interest. Harley and his cabal were, however, too prudent to give any answer to

these proposals, until they were firmly established in office; but, in December, they acknowledged the overtures from the french court, and, through the means of Gualtier, clandestinely established a regular intercourse with the minister of Louis.

Thus cut off from all share in political transactions, Marlborough did not suffer his disgust to damp his zeal; but laboured more earnestly to complete the military plans, which he had already concerted with Eugene.

During the winter, the greatest exertions had been made for the ensuing campaign, and the british ministers, in particular, had not spared the most vigorous efforts. In Spain, the allied forces had been considerably augmented; large supplies voted for this special service; and the duke of Argyle appointed to the command, instead of general Stanhope, who was still detained a prisoner. It was, therefore, expected that the troops in Catalonia would be able to maintain a defensive position, while the grand exertion was made on the side of the Netherlands.

The fortunate circumstances which had occurred in other quarters, justified a hope of the most auspicious result. By the pressing instances of the maritime powers, the courts of Vienna and Turin had been reconciled; the duke of Savoy, gratified by the concessions of the emperor, agreed to resume the command; and a powerful army was to assemble in Piémont early in the spring, for the purpose of penetrating into Dauphiné, and accomplishing the design which had been frustrated in the preceding year.

The emperor found greater facility than hitherto, in co-operating on the side of the Rhine, and in the Netherlands. Having appeased the troubles in Hungary, by the pacification of Zatmar, he was enabled to transfer great part of the forces, which had been employed against the insurgents, to a more important field of action. Eugene was preparing to join his illustrious colleague in the Netherlands, with a considerable accession of strength; and, if England continued steady to her engagements, the two great commanders hoped, by a well-concerted and splendid achievement, to conquer the monarchy of Spain in the heart of France.

The french monarch saw the storm gathering round his frontier with anxiety, but with unshaken firmness. Although his kingdom was exhausted by the protracted duration of a ruinous war, he found new resources in the loyalty of his subjects, and obtained recruits for his armies, and contributions for his immense expenditure. He was also well aware, that if he could continue the contest for another year, and prevent any fatal defeat, by remaining on the defensive, he should wean England from the grand alliance. By that fortunate event, he hoped to effect, what had long been the object of his anxious wishes, a division among the confederates, and to obtain terms of peace less revolting to his feelings, more consonant to his dignity, and more advantageous to his family and subjects, than had been hitherto proposed by their united counsels. After making the necessary efforts for continuing the contest in Spain, in Dauphiné, and on the Rhine, he directed, as before,

his principal attention to that frontier, which was menaced with the most imminent danger.

While Marlborough was maturing his military arrangements, a series of events occurred, which contributed no less to damp his hopes, than to encourage the enemy.

The new ministry had fully succeeded in their views: they had excluded their political opponents from all share in the government, and degraded every act of their glorious administration; they had inflicted the deepest wounds on the feelings of Marlborough, vilified his reputation, debased his character, and rendered him the object of public execration. But like other victorious parties, they were not long allowed to exult in their success. A schism was already begun, and a new opposition reared its head against Harley and his partisans, composed of the violent tories and jacobites, under the guidance of Rochester. To give union and efficiency to their efforts, a powerful combination was formed, under the name of the October Club, which consisted of 130 members, of whom the majority were jacobites, and formed a body capable of embarrassing, if not controlling, the deliberations of the legislature. At this period, Swift justly observed, in his emphatical language, "The kingdom is as certainly ruined as much as bankrupt merchants. We must have peace, let it be a bad or good one, though nobody dare talk of it. The nearer I look upon things, the worse I like them; the confederacy will soon break to pieces, and our factions at home increase; the ministry are upon a narrow bottom, and stand like an isthmus, between

the whigs on one side, and the violent tories on the other. They are able seamen, but the tempest is too great." *

Not only Harley and St. John were alarmed at their critical situation, but even the queen began to dread, lest the throne should be shaken, in the conflict of contending factions. In this predicament, therefore, both the sovereign and her ministers affected to court the countenance of those whom they had so recently mortified and disgraced. The queen invited lord Somers to long and confidential audiences, and shewed him such marked attention, as induced Swift, and other dependants of the ministry, to suspect that the whigs, aided by the duchess of Somerset, were playing the same game against them, as they themselves had played against the whigs, through the agency of Mrs. Masham. From the same motive also, we discover a striking change in the conduct of Harley and St. John towards Marlborough. Even their political organ, Swift, who had before loaded him with every species of obloquy and calumny, introduced his name into one of the Examiners, in a style of the highest encomium, and indirectly invited him to coalesce with the tories. "Nobody that I know of did ever dispute the duke of Marlborough's courage, conduct, or success; they have always been unquestionable, and will continue to be so, in spite of the malice of his enemies, or what is yet more, the *weakness of his advocates*. The nation only wishes to see him taken out of *ill* hands, and put into *better*." †

* Journal to Stella, March 4. 1710–11.

† Examiner, No. 28. Feb. 15. 1710–11.

The two ministers also repeatedly conferred with the friends of the general, who yet remained in office; in particular, they occasionally consulted with Craggs and Bridges, on the means of effecting a reconciliation, and, in their correspondence, descended to the same fulsome professions, which they had employed while they were merely humble dependants. A single extract from a letter of Mr. St. John to the duke of Marlborough, will suffice to display the symptoms of this revolution in their sentiments.

" My lord; *March 27.*

" Your grace's letter of the 21st of this month, N. S., together with the postscript written after you had seen Mr. Lumley, I read to the queen, and it is a great pleasure to me, to tell your grace, that I never saw her majesty better pleased on any occasion. She commanded me to let your grace know, that nothing but her illness had hindered her from writing to you; that now she is better, you shall very soon hear from her; that she is obliged to you for your concern for her health, and that she desires to be kindly remembered to you.

" Your grace, my lord, has fully answered all the queen's intentions relating to the five regiments, by the orders you have been pleased to give; and I hope they are, by this time, embarking at Ostend, the convoy being gone with a fair wind and mild weather.

" Your grace may be assured of my sincere endeavours to serve you, *and I hope never to see again the time when I shall be obliged to embark in*

a separate interest from you. Craggs dined with me to-day: we were some time alone; and he will inform you how easy we think it is to restore, and confirm, that confidence which is to be desired, among people who can, and who, for the public good, should give the law. I dare say, and will answer, that your grace will do your part for the good of the ministry, and of the credit.

" Mr. Lumley will have been able to tell your grace, how sincerely I wish you established on that bottom, which alone suits the merit and the character of a man like you. I do not believe there is any inclination wanting in the persons mentioned by your grace, and confidence will soon be restored." *

Marlborough received these professions from the secretary, and similar overtures from Harley, with no less appearance of cordiality, though he was too discerning to give implicit credit to language, which he knew to arise from fear, not inclination. He was, indeed, deeply anxious not to offend those whose hostilities he had experienced, and the effects of whose enmity he had ample cause to dread. In a letter to the duchess, he at once explains the motives of his conduct, and deprecates that violence, in which she was too prone to indulge herself, against those who had robbed her of the royal favour.

" *Hague, April* 16. — The reason of my desiring you not to name any of the ministers in any of your letters, is, from the certain assurances I have,

* Bolingbroke's Correspondence, vol. i. p. 128.

of their opening all the letters which come to me. I know you are very indifferent as to their opinion of yourself; but the concern you have for me, must in kindness oblige you never to say any thing of them, which may give offence; since whilst I am in the service, I am in their power, especially by the villainous way of printing, which stabs me to the heart; so that I beg of you, as for the quiet of my life, that you will be careful never to write any thing that may anger them; and for your own satisfaction, be assured that I know them so perfectly well, that I shall always be upon my guard. But whilst I serve, I must endeavour not to displease; for they have it so much in their power to vex me, that I must beg you will, for my sake, be careful in your discourse, as well as in your letters. Be assured that I am very sensible, that I can have no true happiness till I am out of all business, and that I might have the remainder of my life quiet, would endeavour to retain the good liking of every body, which I hope may be compassed, if we could have a tolerable peace. As I love you with all my heart and soul, and could venture my life to give you ease, I hope what I so earnestly desire for my own quiet may not be uneasy to you. My thoughts are, that you and I should endeavour all we can not to have enemies; for if we flatter ourselves with the having many friends, it is not to be expected, when favour is lost, as ours is entirely. I am desirous you would not communicate this letter to any body but to lord Godolphin.

" Our affairs abroad are in so bad a condition, that I almost despair of having any good success

this summer; so that I fear I shall have no other prospect, but that of torment and vexation. But what may happen, or become of me, may God Almighty bless you, and make you happy, as much as may be possible in this world."

At the very moment, however, when Harley and St. John were thus courting the great general, whom they had so deeply injured, they suffered the same malicious attacks to be carried on against his character, and the financial administration of Godolphin, either from inability to restrain the zeal of their violent partisans, or from a wish to raise their own reputation on the ruins of that of their predecessors.

Committees of inquiry had been appointed by the commons, at the commencement of the session, to examine and state the debts of the nation, and scrutinize the management of the revenue. In the course of this inquiry, no effort was spared to work on the public feelings; the most flagrant abuses were charged on the late administration; and the national debts were exaggerated in the highest degree; that of the navy alone being represented as amounting to the enormous sum of £5,130,529. It was even industriously whispered, that the whole national obligations, when exhibited, would exceed all calculation and conjecture.

It was not deemed sufficient to work on the public apprehensions alone; but when the rumours to which this inquiry gave birth, had produced their effect, the prospect of a remedy was held forth, and hints were mysteriously given, of a grand scheme devised by the new minister of

finance, which was to discharge these enormous obligations, to remedy the flagrant misconduct of his predecessors, and to place the national credit on a stable and efficient basis.

Notwithstanding all these artifices, the credit of Harley and St. John continued to decline, and it was daily more dubious, whether even the favour and confidence of the sovereign would enable them to maintain their ground, without coalescing with the whigs, or assimilating with their covert antagonists of the October Club. The credit of Harley was, however, saved by an unexpected incident, which revived his declining popularity, and rendered him once more the object of general interest.

The reader will recollect the marquis of Guiscard, who made a prominent figure in the attempts for exciting insurrections in the interior of France. For some time the powerful recommendations of the duke of Savoy and of Eugene, and the interest of St. John, who had been the companion of his pleasures, joined to unusual brilliancy of parts, a spirit of enterprise, and fascinating manners, induced Marlborough to treat him with peculiar attention, and to employ him in various projects and expeditions. But the fallacy and extravagance of his schemes, his incessant importunity and abundant self-conceit, at length wearied the british general; and, in a letter to Godolphin, he desires to be troubled no longer with the endless projects and memorials, of one whom he considered either as an enthusiast or a madman. Soon afterwards he had reason even to doubt his fidelity, and im-

parted to the queen and Godolphin suspicions that he was engaged in a treacherous correspondence with the ministers of his former sovereign. From compassion, or want of proof, Guiscard was not wholly discarded; and when the regiment of which he had been colonel was broken, after the battle of Almanza, he, by dint of importunity, aided by the influence of his friend St. John, procured a pension of £500 a year. This pension being reduced by Harley to £400, and all his attempts to obtain employment repelled, he made overtures to the french government, and offered to purchase his pardon, by betraying the secrets of those by whom he had been trusted. His machinations being detected by Harley, he was arrested for high treason, under a warrant from secretary St. John.

On the 8th of March, Guiscard was brought to the cockpit, to undergo the usual examination before the great officers of state. He at first firmly denied his guilt, but was confounded by the production of one of his own intercepted letters, and an order was made to convey him to Newgate. Roused to fury by this discovery, he resisted the messenger to whose custody he was delivered, and rushed forward, with the apparent intention of stabbing secretary St. John with a penknife, which he had contrived to secrete. Unable to reach his intended victim, who was on the opposite side of the table, he suddenly turned to Harley, stooped down, and exclaiming, "*à toi donc*," struck him on the breast. The knife breaking on the bone, he repeated the blow with the broken blade, and

while he was raising his hand to give a third stroke, he was attacked by St. John and the other members of the cabinet, with their drawn swords. After receiving several wounds, he was with difficulty secured, and conveyed to Newgate, where he soon died of the injury which he suffered in the struggle. This horrid attempt produced the deepest sensation, and conjecture was exhausted in endeavouring to trace the motives of the assassin. *

Amidst the interest which so barbarous an attempt excited, Harley became the object of general sympathy. Public business was suspended; his door was crowded with inquirers of every class; and the queen, the senate, and the nation, vied in the testimonies of their regard, to one who was considered as a victim devoted for his public services. His wounds were slight, and

* It is curious to observe the different versions of this attempt, as given by Swift, in the Examiner.

"The murderer confessed in Newgate that his chief design was against Mr. Secretary St. John, who happened to change seats with Mr. Harley, for more convenience of examining the criminal. Being asked what provoked him to stab the chancellor, he said, that not being able to come at the secretary as he intended, it was some satisfaction to murder the person whom he thought Mr. St. John loved best."

This account was doubtless communicated by secretary St. John, but as it was displeasing to Harley and his friends, Swift, in a subsequent number, confessed it to be a blunder.

"* * * The third is a blunder, that I say Guiscard's design was against Mr. Secretary St. John, and yet my reasonings upon it are, as if it were personally against Mr. Harley. But I say no such thing, and my reasonings are just. I relate only what Guiscard said in Newgate." — Examiner, No. 32, 33.

This subterfuge is remarkable, because we learn from Swift himself, in a subsequent publication, that St. John disputed with Harley the honour of being the intended victim, and took umbrage that the whole merit was ascribed to his colleague. — Swift's Account of the late Change of Ministry.

he was soon declared out of danger; but the impulse which had been given to national feeling continued to operate, and it appeared as if the fate of England depended on his recovery.

Marlborough was greatly shocked at the news of this flagitious attempt, and, in sympathy for the sufferings of the minister, forgot his former ingratitude. He writes with abhorrence of the barbarous villainy of Guiscard, and, while he congratulates Harley on his escape, expresses the utmost anxiety for his recovery. *

While the attention of all classes in England was arrested by the struggles of contending factions, and the hopes and fears of the public hung on the life of the wounded minister, the military preparations proceeded with unusual activity; and the views of Europe were again turned to the events of war and the campaign, which was expected to exhibit the final effort of the french monarchy.

Marlborough was on the point of quitting the Hague, when intelligence arrived of still deeper interest, which he thus communicates to Mr. Harley:

"*Hague, April 22.* — I have been unwilling to trouble you during your illness, but do it now, in hopes my letter may find you abroad, and perfectly recovered. I sent off a packet-boat yesterday morning, express, with letters to Mr. St. John, to give an account of the emperor's being taken ill of the small-pox. The effect that distemper has had on the dauphin puts these people here under the

* Letter to Harley, March 24.

greatest consternation. They are sensible, if he should die at this juncture, it would put all the affairs of the allies into such confusion, that they can have no recourse, under God, but to England for their safety. I am obliged to leave this place to-morrow morning early, in order to hasten to the army, where my presence is the more necessary at this critical time. I did not think, when I dispatched my letters last night, to have troubled Mr. St. John the following post; but this matter is of such consequence, that I shall be obliged to write to him before I go to bed, or to-morrow morning, before I take coach, being willing to stay the last minute, to see whether we may have any later news from Vienna, so shall desire leave to refer you to him, and only add that the measures that will be taken at this time, are, what may bring the States to an entire dependance on her majesty and the ministry, on which our common safety must, in a great measure, depend. I am, truly, &c."

While the general was hastening to the army, and had already reached Tournay, fondly expecting the immediate presence of Eugene, and anticipating a brilliant opening of the campaign, by the commencement of offensive operations, in conformity with the assurances recently received from his illustrious colleague *, he was shocked with intelligence of the event which he had foreboded; an event which clouded all their prospects, and changed, in an instant, the fate of the war, and the

* Letter from Eugene to Marlborough, March 21.

destiny of Europe. This was the sudden death of the emperor Joseph, who, by the malignity of his disorder, was hurried to the grave in a few days, in the thirty-fourth year of his age, and the seventh of his reign. Marlborough immediately transmitted the disastrous intelligence to secretary St. John, with an inclosure from prince Eugene, which characterises the feelings of his heroic mind at this awful crisis.

"*Tournay, April* 29. — When I writ to you by last post, I was pretty easy from what I had from count Zinzendorf, in relation to the news from Vienna; but yesterday noon I received the inclosed letter from him, with the account of the emperor's death, which, you may believe me, puts our affairs here in no little confusion. You here have what the prince of Savoy writes to me, and a copy of his to count Zinzendorf, as also of the count's to me, on this subject, and will observe the apprehensions I entertain, of having the imperial and palatine troops called away, which puts us so much to a stand, that we shall not dare to venture upon any siege, since, if we lose this corps, though we had never so fine a prospect, it would entirely break our measures."

From Prince Eugene to the Duke.

"*Mentz, April* 23. — Sir; Your highness, I doubt not, is apprized of what has retarded my journey until now. It appears to be an absolute fatality. This turkish aga made us wait for him a long time, notwithstanding all the expedients that were used to hasten his coming. I was setting out, two days after having given him audiences,

and in this interval the emperor fell sick. I departed, however, on the 16th at day-break, by his order, as he was believed to be out of * danger. The same day, towards evening, his malady increased, and he died next morning at eleven. Your highness knows what a blow this is to the affairs of Europe; but it is still more severe to those who had the honour to serve him, and particularly to me, who have always felt a strong attachment to his person. I received, in consequence, an express from the empress-mother, who governs in the name of king Charles, to come and confer with the elector of Mentz, and to take the command of the empire, as marshal. I am, therefore, going to-morrow. If the enemy make no great movements on this side, I think I shall receive orders to go into Holland, and to confer, on my route, with the electors of Treves and palatine; but if, with a view to profit by this opportunity, they reinforce themselves on the side of the empire, it will then be necessary to do the same. I therefore send an order to count Felz, to obey your highness in all things until my arrival, and hold himself in readiness to march hither at the first order. Your highness may be assured, that I shall not send to him but in case of necessity; but you know that in these circumstances, and in an interregnum like the present, affairs do not go on without alarm, and a little confusion. I hope to

* It appears from a letter of count Zinzendorf, that the emperor would not permit Eugene to pay his final visit, because the prince had never had the small-pox.

see your highness soon, though that is not wholly certain. Believe me," &c. *

Many fatal consequences flowed from this disastrous event. The energies of the house of Austria were palsied at the commencement of a new reign, and the immediate exertions for securing the elevation of Charles to the throne of the empire, suspended the military operations in the Netherlands, and frustrated the projects of the two commanders; because it required the presence of the german troops, with their great chief, in the empire, and because many of the minor princes of the germanic body were likely to withdraw their contingents, who had already joined, or withhold those who were on their march. Another unfortunate result was, that it revived the ancient jealousy against the house of Austria, lest Charles, by uniting his hereditary dominions with the spanish monarchy and the crown of the empire, should consolidate a power equal to that which, under Charles V., had threatened the liberties of Europe. This jealousy instantly manifested itself in England; and the british ministers artfully availed themselves of it, to forward their negotiations with France, by insinuating that the interests of England and Europe would be less endangered by a partition of the spanish monarchy between the bourbon and austrian families, provided the crowns of Spain and France were separated, than by sanctioning such an accumulation of territory in the head of the house of Austria. Insinuations so favourable to the views of Louis, were naturally

* Translation from the original in french.

countenanced by the french partisans, and the monarch himself acted with consummate address, by secretly promoting the elevation of Charles, while he publicly affected to support the elector of Bavaria.

The first object of the british and dutch cabinets, on this alarming emergency, was to secure the election of the austrian prince. Secretary St. John sent immediate orders to the duke of Marlborough, to co-operate with Eugene and the States, and we soon afterwards find the general announcing this resolution of the british cabinet to king Charles, and presaging its accomplishment.

" Sire ; *June* 3.

" I have received, with all due respect, the letter which your majesty was pleased to write to me on the 9th of last month, on learning the mournful intelligence of the death of the emperor. I can assure your majesty, that all persons, both in England and in these countries, have been most deeply affected by it, yet not a moment has been lost in taking the requisite measures on so unexpected an event. Your majesty will have been already informed of the resolutions, which the queen and the States instantly, and without the smallest hesitation, adopted in favour of your majesty, for your elevation to the throne of the empire ; and there is no reason to doubt that your majesty will be elected without the least difficulty, notwithstanding the intrigues of our enemies, who hoped to have taken advantage of this opportunity, to throw the affairs of the empire into confusion. But the peace with Hungary, which immediately

ensued, has almost induced them to forego their design. It is also a singular mark of the divine protection over the august house, to have accomplished that work, in a conjuncture when there was little hope, and when, on the contrary, it was to have been apprehended that the hungarians would have assumed a higher tone. We have reason to augur, that Providence will continue more and more to shed its precious blessings on the reign of your majesty. Affairs in this country are not in a very promising state. We have been in the field more than a month, and the enemy still maintain themselves in an inaccessible camp, having taken great care to fortify the fordable parts of the rivers; but I yet hope that God will grant us a favourable opportunity for attacking them, which is what we ought most earnestly to desire, and to that object we direct all our attention.

" I intreat your majesty to be assured, that I have nothing more at heart, than to prove my entire devotion by my actions, and that I shall ever employ myself for your interests, being with all respect," &c.

In the midst of the anxiety and suspense created by this momentous event, the contending armies in the Netherlands again took the field.

The great object of the french monarch being to prevent the irruption of the allied forces beyond the interior line of fortresses, which covered the frontier on the side of Arras and Cambray, Villars had employed the latter part of the preceding campaign in forming a series of lines, of considerable

strength, which had been greatly augmented during the winter. Early in the spring he quitted Paris, began to assemble his forces in the vicinity of Cambray, and had the satisfaction to find his formidable works completed.

This grand system of defence embraced a line extending from Namur, on the Meuse, to the coast of Picardy. It ran along the marshy banks of the Canche, and was supported by the posts of Montroueil, Hesdin, and Frevent, while the greater fortresses of Ypres, Dunkirk, Gravelines, Calais, and St. Omer, in front, contributed to render the approach more difficult. Across the plain which stretches between the Canche and the Gy, ran a series of connected redans, beginning at Oppy, near Rebreuve, and terminating at Montenancourt, the two flanks of which were supported with strong redoubts. The rivulet Gy, to its junction with the Scarpe, and the Scarpe to Biache, were checked by small dams which caused inundations. Along the line of this natural defence were redoubts or works, at Pont du Gy, and below Arras, at Athies, Fampoux, and Biache; the three latter places served as têtes-de-pont. At Biache, a canal of communication was opened from the Scarpe, by Sailly, to the marshes and inundations of the Sanzet, near L'Ecluse. At this place, as well as at Pallue and Aubanchoeil-au-bac, were narrow dams, sustaining causeways across the inundations, and defended by a redoubt and fortified water-mill, and a small garrison in the castle. The fire of these posts protected a dam, which was laid across the canal of communication with Douay, and by

retaining the supply of water, rendered the navigation almost useless. At Aubigny, opposite Aubanchoeil-au-bac, was a redoubt, and farther on the fortress of Bouchain; while têtes-de-pont at Neuville and Denain, covered the course of the Scheld to Valenciennes. From hence ran a series of intrenchments to the Sambre, supported by Quesnoi and Landrecies; and along that river, Maubeuge and Charleroi completed the line of defence, as far as Namur.

The armies had now begun to assemble, and, with a heavy heart, Marlborough quitted Tournay to assume the command, with little hopes of being joined by his illustrious colleague, who was still detained in the empire. On the 30th of April he fixed his head quarters at Orchies, between Lille and Douay, where the greater part of his troops were collected. The imperialists were posted at Pont à Marque; while the forces under the british general extended to Candus. Their total amount was 184 battalions and 364 squadrons, of which, 65 battalions and 120 squadrons belonged to the army of Eugene. *

* There is considerable discordance in the estimates of the relative strength of the armies in the printed accounts of this campaign. Milner and Lediard compute them as follows:—

	Batt.	Squad.	
Marlborough	119	226	111 field pieces, 8 howitzers, 40 pontoons.
Eugene	65	120	
Total	184	346	
Deduct in garrison	45	40	
Remains	141	306	Brigadier Hill, brother of Mrs. Masham, obtained 5000 men for the conquest of Quebec; these, all british, probably left the duke in the plains of Lens.
Brigadier Hill....10 / Eugene's detachment.....12	22	50	
Total in the field	119	256	

On the 1st of May, in the evening, the allies again moved forward in two columns by the left, crossing the marshes and bridge over the Scarpe, at Lalain, and debouched by the wood of Pecquencourt. The imperialists forming the right, extended from Ferin and Goeulzin to Lietard; while the forces of Marlborough stretched from thence on the left beyond Somain. Here they found themselves in presence of the french, who were posted behind the marshes bordering the Sanzet and the Scheld. The head quarters of Villars were established at Oisy, while his right extended beyond Bouchain, and his left to Monchy le Preux.

On the 4th of May, Marlborough thus writes to Godolphin:—

"Whilst I thought you at Newmarket I have not troubled you with any of my letters. Since our being in the field, we have had, and have still, very wet weather. The marshal de Villars was

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But it appears that Eugene took more than 50 squadrons, indeed all his cavalry, which left Maalborough only 119 battalions, with 226 squadrons. Quincy gives Marlborough 94 battalions, 145 squadrons, and Eugene 47 battalions, 111 squadrons, which would make 141 battalions, 256 squadrons. Deducting 12 battalions, and 50 squadrons, as the corps which Eugene took away, there would remain 129 battalions, 206 squadrons. The french biographer makes the combined allied force 141 battalions, 246 squadrons, and this computation comes nearer the truth. He estimates the army of Villars at 156 battalions, 227 squadrons; from which having detached 25 battalions 41 squadrons, a total remained of 131 battalions 186 squadrons. This was the field force; for Milner and others estimate the whole at 192 battalions, 348 squadrons. The difference, if correct, arose probably from the forces stationed in the garrisons, and the numerous posts the french lines required. The french artillery, &c. were computed at 90 field pieces, 12 howitzers, and 50 pontoons.

pleased to tell my trumpet yesterday, that the death of the emperor would occasion great disorders among the allies, and that he should be 30,000 stronger than we; however, this does not hinder him from doing all in his power for the strengthening his camp, so that as yet we lie very quiet on both sides.

" I know not what projects the emperor's death may put them upon, on the side of Germany; but if their superiority be as great as he says it will be, I should not apprehend much from them, but that of their being able to hinder us from acting, which, to my own particular, would be mortification enough; for since constant success has not met with approbation, what may I not expect when nothing is done! As I rely very much on Providence, so I shall be ready of approving all occasions that may offer."

Amidst all the anxiety of the crisis, his domestic tenderness breaks forth to the duchess.

" *May* 7. — By yours of the 4th, I find that you mean to be in your house * this winter. My only design in building that house was, to please you; and I am afraid your going into it so soon may prejudice your health, so that you must be careful of having it well examined at the end of September; for should it not be thoroughly dry, you ought to stay one year longer. * * *

" We have had miserable wet weather ever since we came into the field, and I pity the poor men so much, that it makes me uneasy to the last degree;

* He alludes to the new mansion in Pall Mall, called Marlborough House.

for it can't be otherwise, but great numbers must be sick."

By the same post, we find a sensible letter to the duke of Shrewsbury, in reply to his request for advice and information in the critical situation of affairs.

" My lord; *Camp at Warde, May* 7.

" The mails of the 14th and 17th instant came to hand together, and brought me the favour of your grace's letter, wherein you desire my thoughts upon the present posture of affairs, which is a matter of such consequence, and so intricate, and I am so conscious of my own incapacity, that, were it not to comply with your grace's directions, and that I know it will not be exposed, I should hardly venture on so difficult a task. Your grace will have heard already the steps the States took upon the first notice of the emperor's death, and how many of the electors have already declared in favour of king Charles, for setting him upon the throne of the empire. This being entirely agreeable to her majesty's inclinations on this unfortunate occasion, I conclude it will meet with no other difficulty than the delay that must necessarily attend the usual formalities.

" The next and main point to be considered is, what relates to the spanish monarchy; and here, I must own, I foresee so many, and such insuperable difficulties, that I am very much at a loss how to form, as yet, any scheme; at least, till I hear what steps the earl of Peterborough may have taken with the court of Vienna and the duke of Savoy; for, in my opinion, we must avoid, with the greatest care

imaginable, giving the least jealousy or disgust to either of these courts, till we can see clearly what may be most for the public good. In all probability, king Charles will be soon coming to Germany; for some time at least, his absence must very much encourage the duke of Anjou's party, and, 'tis to be feared, will alienate the affections of the spaniards and catalans from him, so that we may have a harder game to play on that side than ever. We must likewise manage matters with the greatest caution with respect to the duke of Savoy, who, 'tis not to be doubted, will lay in his claim. His royal highness should have the prospect of some considerable advantage to his family upon this great change, and should be shewn that his whole reliance for it must be on the Maritime Powers, and be excited, at the same time, to exert himself to the utmost, in such manner as shall be concerted together; so that he may thereby better deserve her majesty's and the States' friendship. In all cases, nothing can contribute so much to bring us out of our present difficulties as a perfect harmony between England and Holland. This is so evidently the interest of both, that I have reason to hope the States will readily come into such measures as her majesty shall judge most conducive to our common good. It will influence all the allies, keep them steady, and give a greater weight and lustre to all her majesty's councils, which must weaken and discourage, at the same time, our common enemy. I have given your grace, here, my thoughts, by which you will see I have, as yet, but a very imperfect notion of the

present juncture of affairs. When I am better informed, and any thing farther occurs, I will take the liberty of imparting it to you, and should be glad likewise to have your opinion, when you have heard what the earl of Peterborough has been doing in Italy." *

Posted beyond the concave form of that part of the line which extended from Bouchain to Monchy le Preux, Villars considered himself effectively protected from an attack; while the fortresses, projecting like horns at the extremity of this crescent, concealed and facilitated the operations of his detachments against the convoys, the flanks, or the rear of his opponents.

After passing nearly three weeks in a war of convoys, in which the enemy, from their position, reaped occasional advantage, Marlborough had the satisfaction to hear that his illustrious colleague, Eugene, had completed all his arrangements in the empire, and was on his way to the Hague, from whence he purposed to join the army. On the 18th, he thus briefly announces their meeting to the duchess.

"*May* 18. — At my return last night from Pont à Marque, where I went to meet prince Eugene, I found myself so out of order, that I have been obliged for some days to keep at home; but, thank God, I am this day so much better, that I doubt not of being on horseback to-morrow. I let you know this, fearing you might hear it from others, and think it worse than it is. My illness

* From a copy in the Cardonel Papers.

was giddiness, and swimmings in my head, which gave me often sickness in my stomach."

His numerous vexations, indeed, continued to produce a serious effect on his health and spirits, of which the preceding note affords an indication. On receiving intelligence of the death of his former colleague and friend, lord Rochester, he dwells feelingly on his increasing infirmities, and anticipates his own dissolution.

"*May* 25. — I have received the favour of yours of the 4th, by which I see lord Rochester is gone where we must follow. I believe my journey will be hastened by the many vexations I meet with. I agree entirely with you, that men are never wanted; I am sure I wish well to my country, and if I could do good, I should think no pains too great; but I find myself decay so very fast, that, from my heart and soul, I wish the queen and my country a peace, by which I might have the advantage of enjoying a little quiet, which is my greatest ambition.

"The peace of Hungary I should hope might be a good step towards peace, especially if the king of Sweden should not succeed in his projects; for I believe the king of France is in great expectation of what may be done on that side. I have already told you that we are very considerably weaker, and the enemy much stronger than the last campaign; so that God only knows how this may end."

In this interval, Marlborough had the satisfaction of hailing the presence of his colleague, who reached the camp of Lewarde on the 23d, and

joined in the festival which the british commander gave to his companions in arms on the anniversary of the victory at Ramilies, the commemoration of which, infused additional spirit and energy into the whole army. * His head quarters, that evening, were fixed in the abbey of Auchin. The succeeding days were devoted to political and military arrangements; and, on the 28th, the two generals reviewed the whole army at the head of the camp. Marlborough was anxious to detain his illustrious colleague and the imperial troops in the Netherlands, for the purpose of prosecuting offensive operations; but the intelligence which arrived of the intended march of french detachments to the Rhine, created such an alarm at Vienna, that Eugene received positive orders to detach the principal part of his forces to that quarter, in order to repel the expected attempts of the enemy to thwart the election. Accordingly, on the 13th of June, general Cadogan, with the quarter-masters of the army, repaired to Lens, to mark out a new camp; while the prince of Hesse, with 30 squadrons, occupied the heights of Sailly, in front of Vitry, in order to cover the intended movement. At two the ensuing morning, the whole army broke up, and while the reinforcements for Germany filed off to the rear, the forces under the british general marched by the right, in six columns. They traversed the Scarpe between Vitry and Douay, and extended across the plains of Lens, placing their right at Lievin, on the Sonchet, and the left towards Equerchin. The

* Milner.

baggage turned to the rear of Douay, and rejoined the army by crossing the canal at Auby and Dourges.

On the same day, the two generals parted from each other for the last time during the war, and took leave with the deepest sentiments of regret, and anxious forebodings for the future. Eugene proceeded to Tournay, and afterwards repaired to the Hague, to sooth the alarms of the dutch, and obtain their consent to the intended march of the imperialists towards the Rhine. Here he was detained till the middle of July, in concerting the military operations in Germany, and making such arrangements as were rendered necessary by a new rupture between Sweden and Denmark, which threatened to involve the princes of the north. From thence he hurried towards the Rhine, in the latter end of July, and passed the remainder of the campaign in covering the diet of election, and watching the movements of the french army under marshal Harcourt.

Although Villars exulted in this diminution of the forces to which he was opposed, and displayed his characteristic confidence, he also, like his great antagonist, felt the irksomeness and insecurity of his own situation. The troops, discouraged by the length and disasters of the war, deserted in numbers, and the officers were destitute of pay and resources; while the scarcity of subsistence obliged him to scatter his cavalry towards the rear, and his movements were cramped by the want of draught horses for the conveyance of his artillery. At the same time, to use his own words, his hands were tied by his sovereign, who, intent on other

projects, broke his measures, by positive orders to avoid an engagement. *

In this situation, however, he displayed as much activity and energy as were consistent with his instructions. On the 14th of June, when the allies withdrew from their position, he made a corresponding movement with his left to join 60 squadrons advancing from their cantonments on the Crinchon, and then halted, with his two flanks at Montenancourt and Biache, and his centre at Fampoux; while his head quarters were established in the suburbs of Arras.

The position of the allied army on the open plains of Lens was an evident offer of battle, which he affected anxiety to accept. For this purpose, he threw 18 bridges over the Scarpe, ordered several reconnoitrings, and gave every demonstration of a design to engage; but all his manœuvres terminated in a few trifling skirmishes, and an attempt to surprise the castle of Vimy, in which he was repulsed.

Meanwhile a corps of 15 battalions and 15 squadrons had been drawn from his army to the Rhine; and on the 28th of June, a still farther reduction of his forces took place, by the march of a second detachment, of 10 battalions and 26 squadrons, to the same destination. He was thus left with an army of 131 battalions, and 186 squadrons; and though superior in infantry to his opponents, he was now too weak in cavalry, even had the orders of his court permitted him, to measure his strength with his able antagonists on the open plains of Lens.

* Mem. de Villars, tom. ii. An. 1711.

CHAPTER 101.

1711.

Political affairs in England. — Progress of the negotiation with France. — Preliminary proposals transmitted to the british cabinet — Concealed from Marlborough. — Harley lays before the commons his grand scheme of finance, which is approved and applauded. — His political embarrassments. — Death of his rival, lord Rochester. — Created earl of Oxford and Mortimer, and appointed lord high treasurer. — Disposal of the other offices of state. — His scheme to decry the late administration. — Votes in the house of commons against abuses in the expenditure. — Report of the house against the late administration. — Address to the queen announces a deficit of thirty-five millions unaccounted for. — Oxford deceives the whigs, and courts the duke of Marlborough. — Their correspondence.

In this position the two armies remained stationary a month, and we therefore avail ourselves of the interval of suspense, to resume our review of political affairs in England, as far as they regarded the interests or feelings of the british commander.

We have already adverted to the commencement of the clandestine negotiation with France, and the mysterious secresy hitherto preserved towards the duke of Marlborough. Since that period, the negotiation had rapidly advanced, and Louis, discovering daily new proofs of a favourable disposition in the british ministry, accomplished his pur-

pose of establishing a separate intercourse, by declaring his resolution to make no farther direct communication to the States. This proposal was readily accepted, and, on the 27th of April, secretary St. John transmitted to lord Raby *, the new plenipotentiary at the Hague, a sketch of six preliminary articles offered by the french court, as the foundation of a general treaty of peace. The high tone of this overture sufficiently indicated the advantages which the enemy had reaped from the recent changes in England.

No longer treating the possession of Spain as a question in dispute, the king of France expatiated on his own means to maintain the war with glory, and offered terms calculated to lure the commercial cupidity of England, to the detriment of her better interests. He promised real security to the british trade to Spain, the Indies, and the Mediterranean, a sufficient barrier to the dutch, conformably to the wish of the british nation, and freedom of commerce to the subjects of the republic. A reasonable satisfaction was also tendered all the allies of England and Holland. He added, that as the advantageous situation of Spain left no room for difficulty, new expedients might be devised to regulate the succession of that monarchy to the satisfaction of all parties interested. On the acceptance of these conditions, conferences were to be opened; and the british ministry were flattered with the option of treating with the french plenipotentiaries, in conjunction with

* Bolingbroke's Correspondence, vol. i. p. 172.

Holland alone, or jointly with the ministers of all the allies. Liege, or Aix-la-Chapelle, was proposed as the place of congress; but the choice was left to the queen.

Lord Raby *, on the receipt of these overtures, was ordered secretly to impart them to the pensionary, with the resolution of her majesty to act in concert with the States in making both peace and war; but as a peculiar mark of slight and reserve to the general, the secretary adds, "the duke of Marlborough has no communication from hence of this affair; I suppose he will have none from the Hague." †

This negotiation had been pursued by Harley with the evident purpose of connecting the arrangements for peace with his new system of domestic policy and finance.

After a tedious confinement, he had gratified the general expectation by appearing in public, and resuming the functions of his office. He was hailed with all the exultation which could be inspired by the interest taken in his safety, and received the congratulations of the commons, which were conveyed in a style of adulation seldom paid even to sovereigns themselves. He availed himself of the impression which his re-appearance produced, to bring forward his grand plan of finance.

On the second of May, he disclosed to the commons his scheme for satisfying the national creditors, who had long and anxiously expected the developement of his plan. It was doubtless con-

* Soon afterwards created earl of Strafford.

† Bolingbroke's Correspondence, vol. i. p. 175.

ceived with great ingenuity, and calculated to dazzle the public mind, ever more intent on distant and splendid profits, than on immediate and solid advantages. The debts of the navy, ordnance, and other branches of the public service, which amounted to between nine and ten millions, were to be funded on the faith of parliament, and bear an interest of 6 per cent., payable from the taxes granted for the service of the preceding year. As these supplies were, however, mortgaged till 1716, adequate provision was to be made in the interval, for the discharge of the interest; and the impositions then appropriated were to be rendered perpetual. To draw contributions to this fund, the subscribers were incorporated into a company, which was to enjoy the monopoly of the lucrative trade to Mexico and Peru, and other parts of the Spanish Indies.

The attractions of present interest and future profit, joined to the actual popularity of the proposer, repressed the spirit of investigation; and, instead of adverting to the fundamental defects of the scheme, or the chimerical contingencies on which it depended, it was hailed as the highest effort of financial genius, and eagerly embraced without the slightest consideration. It was also regarded by many, as the pledge of a peace with France; because the establishment of a trade to the Spanish Indies could only be founded on a secret understanding with the two Bourbon courts; and, indeed, the conjecture so far rested on fact, that the first article of the french proposals comprised, as we have already seen, an engagement to

secure the english in the enjoyment of a trade to Spain, the Indies, and all the ports of the Mediterranean.

All things seemed to smile on the fortunate minister; for on the very day on which he developed this popular scheme, the sudden death of the earl of Rochester delivered him from a colleague in office, who was a powerful rival for the royal favour, who gave energy and consistency to the efforts of the violent tories, and who waited only the developement of his plan to expose its defects. Harley was now paramount in the cabinet, enjoyed the full confidence of the sovereign, guided the house of commons, and was at once the dispenser of royal favour, and the idol of the day. The national voice already began to chide the tardiness of the queen in delaying to invest him with honours equal to his merits and services; but the wishes of the public were soon gratified, for before the end of May he was raised to the peerage, by the royal title of earl of Oxford and Mortimer, and constituted lord high treasurer.

The changes which arose out of the death of Rochester, were equally favourable to Harley and his party; for the duke of Buckingham was appointed to the vacant post of president of the council, lord Poulett was transferred from the treasury board to the office of lord high steward, and the chancellorship of the exchequer was given to Mr. Benson, a mere cipher in office, and a dependant on his principal.

As every step of Harley's political career had evinced his anxiety to ground his reputation on the

ruin of that of his predecessor, so he did not disdain to suffer even his patent of peerage to convey a cruel, though covert stigma on the late treasurer. After a fulsome panegyric on his own merits as a statesman, the new peer is described as the champion of public credit, the deliverer of his country from the *pest of peculation and plunder* *, as well as the founder of a new system of domestic finance, and of foreign commerce to the western world.

With the same view he suffered a special committee to be appointed for the purpose of continuing the investigation of the public accounts. This committee consisted of seven persons peculiarly hostile to the late administration, being either violent tories, or notorious jacobites. † After a severe and scrutinizing investigation, they laid before the house a series of charges against the late financial administration, for not having accounted for the sums voted by parliament, and for flagrant embezzlements of the public revenue.

On the 15th of May the report of the committee was taken into consideration, and certain resolutions were proposed.

1. That the increase of the expences beyond the annual supplies had been the chief occasion of the national debts. 2. That certain sums, issued for the service of the navy, had been appropriated to the use of the army. 3. That this transfer had been injurious to the navy. 4. That the appli-

* "Latè grassanti peculatus pesti coercendæ, novisque ad alterum orbem commerciis instituendis consulent."

† Among these were Shippen and Lockhart. — Chandler's Debates and Journals.

cation of any unappropriated sums was a misapplication of the public money.

These propositions were evidently levelled against the late treasurer, and were supported by the whole force of the ministerial party. In the course of the preparatory discussion, St. John employed all the arts of his splendid and plausible eloquence in favour of the inquiry; boldly asserting, that none but those who were enemies to their country, or who had themselves plundered the treasury, could be so rash as to oppose it.

The friends of Godolphin, and the adherents of the whigs, combated this inquisitorial scrutiny with equal force; and among the ablest of these advocates, we find the name of Walpole *, arguing against such an indiscriminate censure, and such a rancorous spirit of malicious persecution. The resolutions, however, were carried by a very great majority, and we subjoin a very sensible letter to the duchess from Mr. Maynwaring, who was present on this occasion.

"*Tuesday, past six o'clock.* † — I am just now come from the house of commons, where this day was set apart again to pass censures on the late treasury. Their first vote was, that the exceeding the several sums granted by parliament has been the chief occasion of the debts of the navy, and a violation of the rights of parliament. This was carried by above two to one, and three more questions, depending upon it, without a division; one

* Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, ch. vi.— Cunningham, v. ii. p. 349.

† Plainly written on Tuesday the 15th of May, the day when the resolutions were proposed. — See Journals.

of which was moved by your friend, Mr. Bathurst, who reflected on the land-service, and concluded that the applying any part of the money given to the navy to the payment of the troops, was a sad mismanagement, &c. This has been done sometimes, 'tis true, but never without an absolute necessity, and the navy has always been repaid out of the pay of those troops. * * * * * * * * All the great successes of the war have been carried by these exceeding and extraordinary payments that they have censured. And the parliament always gives a discretionary allowance; and there was intimation in their debates, that if the money did not answer the service of the current year, there could be no doubt but every thing would be made good that was laid out upon great and unforeseen services. And how is it possible for a parliament to provide for things which may be most necessary to be done within the year, which perhaps the ministers know nothing of when the supplies are granted, or if they should know, would not be fit to be divulged! Yet, now, all this is mismanagement and misapplication."

On the 24th, the commons appointed another committee to draw up a general report of these and other abuses, to be laid before the queen; and Auditor Harley, the brother of the treasurer, had the principal share in preparing it.* The new committee did not fail to discharge the functions imposed upon them with all the vindictive spirit which actuated the ministers. Their representa-

* Boyer's Queen Anne, p. 497.

tion, after several votes and resolutions, was finally embodied in a general address to the queen, which was presented on the 4th of June. After applauding the zeal of the legislature, in voting supplies, and discharging the public debt, it stated, that in tracing the causes of these debts, the commissioners had discovered notorious embezzlements and mismanagements in public offices, misapplication of parliamentary grants, and frauds and depredations of the most flagrant kind. They remarked, "from all these evil practices and worse designs of some persons, who had, by false professions of love to their country, insinuated themselves into your royal favour, irreparable mischief had accrued to the public, had not your majesty, in your wisdom, seasonably discovered the fatal tendency of such measures, and out of your singular goodness to your people, removed from the administration of affairs, those who had so ill answered the favourable opinion your majesty had conceived of them, and, in so many instances, grossly abused the trust reposed in them."

The commissioners summed up the series of their accusations with declaring that of the monies granted by parliament for the public service to Christmas, 1710, no less a sum than £35,302,107 remained unaccounted for, of a great part of which no accounts had ever been so much as laid before the auditor. *

This unjust and calumnious report produced an almost electric effect. The people, accustomed to

* History of Europe for 1711, p. 215. — Journals and Debates.

regard the decisions of the legislature with reverence and respect, could not conceive that the solemn sanction of parliament would have been given to a statement principally founded on erroneous grounds. The whigs, therefore, became more than ever the objects of popular obloquy; and the late changes were not only hailed as the salvation of the country, but the new ministers acquired additional confidence for the care and vigilance which they had thus appeared to display in the detection of abuses, and their ability in redeeming the public credit. Under the impression produced by this master-stroke of political craft, the parliament was prorogued, and the members dispersed, to extend its effects, and spread the same malignant spirit among their respective constituents.

The ebullition of public favour was, however, too violent to be durable; and Oxford soon found that envy and rivalry are the constant associates of favour and power. Even among his colleagues and dependants, he experienced a change of sentiment; for St. John, who had hitherto acted a subordinate part, began to repine at his paramount ascendancy, and complained of his coldness and reserve, his monopoly of royal favour, and his dilatoriness in the conduct of public business. He thus expresses his complaints in a confidential letter to the earl of Orrery: "Mr. Harley, since his recovery, has not appeared at the council, or at the treasury at all, and very seldom in the house of commons. We, who are reputed to be in his intimacy, have few opportunities of seeing him,

and none of talking freely with him. As he is *the only true channel* through which the queen's pleasure is conveyed, so there is, and must be, a perfect stagnation, till he is pleased to open himself, and set the water flowing." *

The new treasurer had now developed all his designs, and the public having no longer novelties to amuse, or hopes and fears to occupy their attention, began to cool in their attachment, and to regard with indifference what they had so highly applauded. St. John, who formed a just estimate of his situation, observes, " He stands on slippery grounds, and envy is always near the great to fling up their heels, on the least trip which they make. * * * * * Many changes," he adds, " have been made at the rising of the parliament, and although they are such as ought to satisfy our friends; yet the number of the discontented must always exceed that of the contented, as the number of pretenders does that of employments." †

Oxford himself was too discerning to be ignorant of his precarious situation. He well knew the uncertainty of public opinion, and was aware that when the burst of popular enthusiasm was past, the plenitude of royal favour would scarcely suffice to shield him against the attacks of open enemies, the insidious machinations of discontented adherents, or the wiles of envious courtiers. He therefore resumed his former policy of cajoling all parties, and endeavoured to sustain his credit and power,

* Bolingbroke's Correspondence, v. i. p. 216.

† St. John to the earl of Orrery, June 12. 1711. Bolingbroke's Correspondence, vol. i. p. 242.

by luring their cupidity, or exciting their mutual antipathies.

In the midst of his perplexity and forebodings, the death of the duke of Newcastle, who held the office of lord privy seal, produced a crisis in his political life. For the vacant post, numerous candidates started from different parties, all dangerous to disoblige. Among these, we distinguish the earl of Nottingham, head of the violent tories, and lord Somers, who was strongly recommended by the duke and duchess of Somerset, and whose admission into the ministry was expected to ensure the support of the whigs, Godolphin, and Marlborough. Oxford, however, would not associate Nottingham in office, from a dread of his overbearing temper, and the influence he possessed among the violent tories; nor could he admit Somers, even if inclined to accept the post, without exposing himself to the charge of inconsistency, and to the danger of being overborne by the whigs, whom he had so grievously offended. * Finding that

* It is very difficult to ascertain the real intentions and motives of so subtle a politician as Harley; but we learn from the contemporary evidence of Cunningham, as well as from the letters of Mr. Maynwaring to the duchess, that he was again successful in luring and deceiving the whigs. — See Cunningham, vol. ii. book 14. passim.

In one of his letters, dated May 4. Mr. Maynwaring observes to the duchess, " He (Mr. Harley) has taken care to inform the world, that he is to be treasurer, and made a peer, with Sir S. Harcourt, of which I had a long, and I believe, true account, last night from an intimate friend of the duke of Newcastle, who was always that to Mr. Harley. He told me, that the queen was the most impatient in the world to have Mr. Harley preferred. That the president's place had been offered to every one of the cabinet round, and that the duke of Buckingham would have it at last, to make way for lord Poulett. That there never had been any thought of lord Nottingham, but quite the

peace alone could secure his power, he promoted to the vacant office the earl of Jersey, who had been the first channel of his negotiations with France; and, on his sudden death, he resorted to the unusual expedient of conferring it on a churchman, Dr. Robinson, dean of Rochester, soon afterwards raised to the see of Bristol, who had signalized himself by his skill in negotiation, and whom he destined for the office of plenipotentiary at the congress, for which arrangements were already making.

In this state of perplexity some mutual friends attempted to form a coalition of parties, and promote his reconciliation with the whigs and the duke of Marlborough. * He himself either saw the advantages of the proposal, or deemed it necessary to avert the hostilities of his political opponents, by continuing to flatter their hopes. With this view, we find him in his correspondence

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contrary. That Mr. Harley would think his power at an end if that person were taken in, which would only give life and encouragement to that party, which he intended to weaken. And that this man agreed exactly with your grace. That although lord Halifax, lord Somers, and lord Sunderland had endeavoured to be well with him, he certainly fooled them who were the last men in the nation that he would have any thing to do with; and that for lord Halifax, he was like the fly upon the wheel, that would always thrust himself upon people, and fancy he did great matters, when, in truth, he only made himself ridiculous, and would never bring the least thing about. I am pretty confident that all this was said by the duke of Newcastle. And I have often wondered how lord Halifax's great spirit could ever bear to speak again with Mr. Harley, when he had been so shamefully exposed last year, about his own going to Holland, and his compounding matters at home."

* Cunningham, vol. ii. p. 563.

with the general, resuming his former tone of devotion and respect; and affecting as much interest in his plans, and as warm an attachment to his person, as are displayed even in the letters of Godolphin himself.

From the Earl of Oxford.

" My lord; *Kensington, June 26.–July 7.*

" I received the honour of your grace's letter by the last mail, and I beg you will be assured, that as I receive the obliging expressions therein as marks of your grace's favour, so I shall study to deserve it, and never give any just occasion to alter your opinion. I have sent a hundred thousand pounds for the service of the army, and did intend to have settled the remittance for the whole campaign, but that I have a prospect of making a better bargain for the public. I have got one stiver in the last 100 thousand pounds, it being at eleven stivers. I hope to present your grace, next week, with the state of the payments thus far, and a scheme for the rest of the year.

" As to Woodstock, I have got from Mr. Vanbrugh an estimate of the works, which are yet to be performed; and I will lay before the queen a scheme for weekly payments, though the debt on the family grows very clamorous; the whole, upon the present civil list, being about four hundred thousand pounds, during the queen's reign.

" I do not doubt but Mr. Secretary gives your grace an account that lord Peterborough arrived here on Sunday. For my own part, I have not had an opportunity of hearing the detail of his proceedings; but the secretary has, and, I pre-

sume, will give your grace notice of what is remarkable. The queen is gone this afternoon to reside at Windsor. I think to stay here for some time, and only go to attend the queen on Saturdays and Sundays. I beseech you to believe, that I will do every thing, which may shew with how real and great respect and deference, I am, &c."

The encouraging style of the letters from the new lord treasurer, and his ardent professions of zeal, induced Marlborough to adopt a similar tone of cordiality, and to communicate to him a project for the purpose of accelerating the termination of the war. Finding from the diminution of his army, by the separation of the imperialists, that he could not conduct his operations on the scale originally concerted, he formed a plan commensurate with his means, and likely to be no less effective. The scheme is only partially explained in the letters still extant; but from the correspondence, which passed on the subject, it appears to have comprised the capture of Bouchain and Quesnoy, before the close of the campaign. The army was then to continue on the frontier during winter, and being rejoined by the imperialists, to anticipate the enemy in the field, in the ensuing spring. The speedy fall of Arras or Cambray was expected from these early operations, and the combined armies, having no longer any fortress to withstand their progress, might penetrate into the heart of France, and dictate terms of peace under the walls of Paris.

To the Lord Treasurer.

" *July* 4.—Your lordship's last letters, which I

have already acknowledged, give me so much encouragement to correspond with you for the future in terms of confidence and friendship, that I cannot but offer to you such thoughts relating to the service, as occur to me in looking forward at this time of inaction.

" The enemy have brought forward a large train of artillery, with all sorts of ammunition and other necessaries for a siege, to Cambray, and are actually erecting magazines there, and at Valenciennes and Bouchain. This can be to no other end than to have it in their power to attack Douay, at the time we shall be obliged to leave the field for want of forage.

" It has cost me some time to consider of the means effectually to prevent this design, and to annoy the enemy at the same time, which I think is only to be done, by keeping the greatest part of the army in this country all the winter, which will oblige the enemy to do the same at an infinitely greater expence; and we shall be in a condition to take the field so early, that they will not be able to hinder our attacking either Arras or Cambray, as may be thought for the good of the common cause. If the project I am framing upon this foundation shall be approved by the queen and the States, I cannot but hope it may prove the means of obliging the french king to think of making fresh offers of peace this winter. But as there will be many points in it, which require to be explained in a more ample manner than can well be done by writing; if you think it deserves your attention, I will, as soon as I receive your

answer, send over lord Stair, as fully instructed in every thing that concerns the project, as he is already acquainted with my sincere desire to live with you in the strictest friendship that may be. In the mean time, I shall not mention a word of this matter to any other person living, the secresy of the project being of the greatest importance."

Reply of the Treasurer.

" *July* 6.—My lord; I received from the hands of lord Mar, just as I came from Windsor, the honour of your grace's letter, and I am not willing to let a post pass, without making your grace my acknowledgments. It is most certain, that you can best judge what is fit to be proposed upon the subject you are pleased to mention, and you are extremely in the right to send a person, who may be able to explain, by word of mouth, your grace's thoughts. You give the necessary caution, that it be kept secret, and I doubt not but your grace will find a sufficient excuse for that lord's coming over, which may amuse the world. I do assure your grace, that I shall not communicate this to any person, but whom the queen shall direct me to tell it to. I hope those who must know it, amongst the States, may observe the same caution.

" I hope it will be needless to renew the assurances to your grace, that I will not omit any thing in my power, which may testify my zeal for the public, and my particular honour and esteem for your grace; and I doubt not, but when the lord you mention comes, I shall satisfy him of the sincerity of my intentions towards your grace. I believe you are well informed of the address of the

house of commons to the queen, to send commissioners to Spain, Portugal, &c., to examine the condition of the army. Flanders was left out of the address by your well-wishers, and, though I will not trouble you with long accounts, I cannot forbear telling your grace, that there is already actually issued to June 26th, out of this year's funds, to Mr. Bridges, for all the forces under his pay, two millions six hundred thirty-six thousand seven hundred thirty-seven pounds, five shillings, and three pence, which will still make it more reasonable to have the remainder applied to the most important services. Your grace will have heard that Mr. Vryberg is dead; I hope the States will find a proper person to succeed him. This morning the duke of Queensberry died; a third secretary is so new a thing in England, and so much out of the way of doing business here, that it ought to be put upon some other foot, if the queen shall think fit to have any one succeed him. I beseech your grace to accept the assurance that I am," &c.

On receiving a letter so replete with expressions of confidence and zeal, the general repaired to the quarters of lord Stair, who was confined with an ague. To this zealous friend he imparted his design in a long conversation. He dwelt with regret on the unfortunate situation of the grand confederacy, and expressed his apprehensions, lest the blood and treasure which had been expended to reduce the exorbitant power of France, should be sacrificed in vain, if he continued to command the army, after having lost the favour of the

sovereign, and the confidence of her ministers. Two expedients, he added, only remained, to remedy this misfortune. The first, that he should be permitted to resign his command, to one more agreeable to the queen and ministry, who might pursue the objects of the grand alliance, till the war was ended, with equal advantage and glory. He declared he should then return with cheerfulness to a private station, and employ his prayers and influence in behalf of his successor. The second expedient was, to offer to continue at the head of the army, provided he could regain the confidence of the queen, and live with the lord treasurer on the same friendly terms as he had done with lord Godolphin. With these offers was connected a more perfect developement of his project, which lord Stair was commissioned to communicate in person. *

The answer of the treasurer will exhibit the manner in which this communication was received.

" My lord; *July* 24.–*Aug.* 4.

" Saturday morning I received the honour of your grace's letter from my lord Stair, and I do assure your grace, that I will never do any thing which shall forfeit your good opinion; and I hope to have an opportunity of a farther conversation with my lord Stair on that head, that he may return sufficiently instructed to give your grace satisfaction on all points. On Sunday lord Stair attended the

* This interesting anecdote is related in a curious letter from lord Stair to lord Marchmont, dated Edinburgh, Dec. 10. 1734, and communicated to me by the late right honourable G. Rose. It is likewise printed in his Remarks on Mr. Fox's History of James II.

queen, and delivered your grace's letter and the other papers yesterday morning, by the queen's command. The duke of Shrewsbury, Mr. Secretary, and myself, had a conference with my lord, who fully explained all the particulars; and we have agreed to make as good an estimate as we can, by the rule of the present contracts, tho' that will be far from being exact, and by Sunday next to lay it before the queen for her approbation. One great point we debated was, how to preserve the secret, and particularly when it comes to be asked of the elector of Hanover about his troops; but that is not what is first to be done. I shall have the honour to acquaint your grace with the steps taken herein from time to time. I hope the pensionary will find some proper expedient to prevent the dangers threatened from the north; and now that we hear the king of Prussia is like to accommodate matters, certainly it were worth trying to soften the king of Denmark. I believe lord Peterborough will go in a few days, to be at the election of the emperor. The queen will also speedily name an arbitrator to go to Milan, to settle matters between the duke of Savoy and the court of Vienna. I am told, just now, that there is some alteration in the distribution of the money to pay the army; that Mr. Sweet * is not upon the same foot he was; I do assure your grace I never heard a word of it until this moment; and I shall send for Mr. Bridges to-morrow to know the meaning of it. I beseech your grace to believe me to be with the greatest respect," &c.

* Agent for the duke of Marlborough, and for the paymaster of the forces, residing in Holland.

CHAPTER 102.

1711.

Prosecution of Marlborough's grand project.—Operations preparatory to the investment of Bouchain.—Skilful movements and stratagems to delude Villars.—Rapid march, and successful passage of the french lines.—Marlborough prudently rejects the advice of the dutch deputies to attack the enemy in their strong position before Cambray.—Extorts the consent of the council of war for the siege of Bouchain.—Passes the Scheld.—Replies to the censures on his conduct, and vindicates his operations, in a letter to count Zinzendorf.

Impressed with the importance of his project, and encouraged by the approbation of the queen and minister, Marlborough prepared to avail himself of his central situation and resources, by effecting the primary object in view, the investment of Bouchain.

This, however, was an enterprise of no small difficulty; for he must previously break through the boasted lines of Villars, and traverse the Scarpe and the Sanzet, with such secresy and promptitude, as again to elude the vigilance and activity of his enterprising antagonist. This undertaking, however, he could not venture to propose in a council of war, from a conviction that he should never obtain the consent of the generals and dutch deputies, to make an attempt of so much difficulty and

danger. But he was not deterred by these considerations, and he hoped, in the course of its gradual accomplishment, to place his army in a situation, where retreat would be perilous, and attack impracticable, and thus to extort from the cautious council their sanction for his ultimate operations. In the execution of this design he developed that sublimity of military talent which has justly stamped this campaign as not the least scientific and glorious in his whole career.

During his encampment at Lewarde, he had observed that the triangular portion of ground, comprised between Cambray, Aubanchoeil-au-bac, and the confluence of the Sanzet and Scheld, offered a position so strong, that a small force could maintain it against a superior enemy. As long, however, as the french held the redoubt at Aubigny, and the works about Arleux, this object could not be accomplished; and, therefore, as a preliminary operation, these posts were immediately attacked. Aubigny was carried without much difficulty, and its loss appeared to create no alarm among the enemy, as their attention was principally fixed on Arleux. To prevent their permanent occupation of this important post, Marlborough recurred to a masterly stratagem. He was aware, that if he took it, the enemy would recapture it, as soon as his army should remove to a distance, and that they would be more intent on its preservation, because it commanded the current of the waters, and enabled them to impede the arrival of supplies. He therefore resolved to play on the impatient and lively imagination of the

french marshal; first, by taking the post, to shew that he could capture it when he pleased; and, secondly, by enlarging and fortifying it, to delude him into the belief that he considered it of importance in a defensive view. These measures he expected would impel Villars to retake it, as soon as the allied army withdrew, and then finding the works extensive, and the allies menacing an attack with all their forces, in another quarter, that he would recall his troops to meet the attempt, and demolish a post, which his antagonist appeared to value. *

For the execution of this stratagem, a detachment of 700 men, with cannon, marched from Douay; and, at night, the duke suddenly turned out the piquet of the army, and moved to the heights in front of Sailly and L'Ecluse, to mask the attack, which was conducted with such spirit, that the redoubt and water-mill were forced, and 120 prisoners taken, before Villars, who hastened to the relief, could arrive. No time was lost in strengthening the redoubt, by a double ditch and pallisades, and by mounting eight pieces of cannon and two mortars. Rantzau, who had been left with 12 battalions and 10 squadrons, to cover the working party, deeming the post sufficiently secure, retired with his principal officers to Douay; and Villars, having personally reconnoitred the camp, seized this favourable moment to surprise it, by the circuitous route of Bouchain. On the night of the 9th, the attempt was made in considerable

* Kane's Memoirs, p. 89. This experienced tactician has ably developed the views of the great commander in this stratagem.

force, by a combined attack on the side of Bouchain, and on that of the french camp, directed by Villars in person; and, though it failed in the main object, it spread alarm through the allied lines, by the slaughter of some sleeping troopers, the capture of 200 prisoners, several hundred horses, a considerable booty, and the disgrace inseparable from a nightly surprise. The allied garrison still retained possession of Arleux, and the covering army remained in its general position, altering only the form of the encampment.

Marlborough appeared to evince great mortification at this dishonour to his arms; but as his stratagem was now matured, he soon afterwards called in the detachment, and, on the 20th, broke up from his position. Thus adroitly leaving Arleux to its fate, he marched by his right in the direction of Bethune, placing his troops between Gosnay and Mezengarde, and establishing his head quarters at the Chartreuse. The next day he resumed his march to Cotenes, his right occupying Etrée Blanche, on the Quelle, his centre being posted at Auchin, and his left at Bouvrière, on the Clairance.

This change of position induced Villars to make a parallel movement. He brought his left, on the 21st, beyond Sambrin; his right was at La Cour des Bois, near Arras; and his front extended behind his formidable lines, with a detached corps at the abbey of Cercamp, on the left bank of the Canche. But before he took his departure, he detached a corps of 16 battalions, and as many squadrons, to carry Arleux, and, after the capture, to

join D'Estaing, who was left on the lines near the Sambre, for the purpose of making a diversion on the side of Brabant. Marshal Montesquiou, at the head of the attacking corps, appeared before Arleux, at day-break on the 23d, and, after a short cannonade, his grenadiers took it by storm, capturing 500 prisoners, with the loss of 80 men killed and wounded. He garrisoned it with 800 men, and stationed six battalions at Pallue to sustain them.

Villars was greatly elated with these trifling advantages; while Marlborough concealed his hopes, by an affected display of chagrin and mortification, under the pretence that his enemies would impute his want of success to his variance with the ministers, to the absence of Eugene, or to inability of coping singly with his able antagonist. He suddenly changed his usual demeanour of courtesy and affability, assumed the appearance of spleen and moroseness, and secluded himself in his tent. He declared to those who had access to his person, that he would attack the enemy at all hazards, and revenge the insult which his army had recently sustained. At this moment he had the satisfaction to learn that Villars had ordered his troops to evacuate Arleux, and demolish the fortifications. He still affected, however, to entertain great apprehensions lest D'Estaing should make an irruption into Brabant, and declared that he must advance to cover that province. He therefore sent lord Albemarle, with 12 battalions and 26 squadrons, to Bethune, and went in person to reconnoitre the position of the hostile army towards Villers Brulin and Aubigny. On learning that D'Estaing had moved

towards Brabant, he made no change in his dispositions, but dispatched generals Ammama and Chanclos to Brussels, and, on the 30th, gave orders to lord Albemarle to be in readiness to join him on his intended march.

We find two letters to lord Godolphin, written during these movements, in which he announces his resolution of engaging the enemy, provided a favourable opportunity should occur; and refers for particulars to Dr. Garth, who had paid him a visit in the camp, on account of his precarious state of health.

"*July* 26. — This day, on our march, I received the favour of your two letters of the 29th of the last month and the 3d of this. You may be very well assured that my inclinations are, at this time, for a battle, believing it to be the interest of the common cause, as well as for mine own honour, to be at this time ventured; for tho' the enemy be stronger than we, yet as the humours of the northern powers are, God knows how long we may be able to keep the troops we have now with us. This, I fear, is so well known to the french, that I apprehend they will not be willing to venture on this side of their lines; and if they had any intention of fighting, our last camp was a very proper place, and we continued in it five weeks, which is very near a demonstration, that their intention is not to make use of their superiority, by venturing a battle, at least not till towards the end of the campaign; so that the consequences then may not be so great as they might otherwise be when there might be time to act in."

" *July* 30. — Doctor Garth intending to leave us to-morrow, I shall not give you any trouble by this night's post. He will acquaint you with our situation, as also of my own health, which, if I could have a little quiet, I might hope to live some few years longer.

" The marshal de Villars has sent 20 squadrons and 17 battalions into Brabant. On the first notice, I have reinforced the garrisons of Bruxelles and Mons, for those people are ill inclined to us. I shall march the army on Saturday, and if I can see any hopes of success, I shall attack them. As to the lending of money, the doctor will let you know that whatever you think right, I shall agree to it."

Meanwhile Villars continued to increase the defences on the plain in his front; and confiding in the strength of his position, and of his forces, he wrote to the king of France the celebrated letter, for which he was so much ridiculed, boasting, that at length he had brought Marlborough to his *ne plus ultra*.

The heavy baggage of the allies having already been sent off on the 28th, under the escort of general Wood, with four battalions and twelve squadrons, in the direction of Douay; bread for six days was clandestinely baked, and forwarded from Lille, and the train of artillery was removed from the camp, under a proper guard. Thus disencumbered, Marlborough broke up, at four in the morning of the 1st of August, and marched in eight columns to the front, by roads and bridges previously prepared. His left halted at Pont de Rebreuve, in front of Houdain, his centre at

Dieval, and the right near Belval, behind the woods of St. Pol, where he was rejoined by lord Albemarle. Detachments were again ostentatiously ordered forward, to clear the roads in the direction of the hostile left. Although several corps had quitted the camp, the object of these marches and counter-marches had not been ascertained by Villars; and it had been industriously divulged, that the british general had called in all his detachments. After these menacing manœuvres, Villars, no longer doubting that he was about to be attacked in his strong post, concentrated all his forces, recalling his distant garrisons, and even, among others, the troops that had been left at Pallue, in the vicinity of Arleux.

Early next morning, Marlborough again moved to the front, and halted between Villers Brulin and Betonsart, his left encamping near the wood of Villers aux Bois, and the right about Bailleul. The cavalry were instantly ordered to collect fascines, of small dimensions, so as not to fatigue the infantry when marching to the attack. On the evening of the 3d, brigadier Sutton, at the head of a strong detachment, left the camp with all the field-artillery, excepting four pieces, and with the pontoons and remaining baggage, including even the last carriage of the general. At day-light of the 4th, Marlborough, attended by most of the general officers, went out to reconnoitre, escorted by the grenadiers of the army, under brigadier Durell, and 80 squadrons of cavalry, the whole camp remaining under arms in front of the position. He rode along the lines, within range

of cannon-shot, and in full view of the anxious enemy, stopping at intervals, and pointing with his cane to different parts of their front; while he explained to the several commanders the direction of the columns which each was to lead to the pretended attack. "This," to use the expression of an eye-witness, "he spoke openly in the hearing of all about him, and, as it were, with a confidence of success; when, at the same time, every one with him was surprised at this rash and dangerous undertaking, and believed it proceeded from the affront which Villars had put upon him, and the ill-treatment he had of late received from the queen and the ministry, which had now made him desperate." * Marlborough then returned to camp, and gave orders to prepare for battle.

The deep-laid plan was now ripe for execution. Villars was in the toils, and the state of the weather promised the advantage of a full moon and cloudless sky for the intended march. While all were in anxious expectation, Cadogan privately quitted the camp, attended only by 40 hussars. In the french lines, hope was raised to the highest pitch, and the disgraces of many campaigns were at last expected to be obliterated by a splendid victory. Among the allies, gloom hung on every countenance: reduced by various detachments, and destitute of artillery, it appeared madness to attack an enemy superior in numbers, and intrenched behind lines bristling with cannon. Yet the long-tried confidence of the troops in the skill of their

* This interesting detail is taken from general Kane, who was present in the army. — Kane's Memoirs, p. 92.

great chief, still excited hopes that he had measures in reserve of which they could not penetrate the plan. At length the dusk of evening began to spread, the tattoo beat, and, before the ruffle of the drums had ceased, orders passed along the line to strike the tents. At the same time, instructions were issued, that officers would be sent to conduct the columns to their destination. Meanwhile, a corps of light cavalry engaged the attention of the enemy on their left, by sweeping rapidly round Sart-le-bois-Sacé and Houvigneul, and then returning towards the camp. A little before nine, the lines facing to the left silently filed off, in four columns, through the woods of Villers aux Bois, Neuville, Theluche, and Gaverelle, with such expedition, that before five in the morning of the 5th, they reached the bank of the Scarpe, near Vitry, where they found pontoons already prepared for their passage, and the field-artillery, which had been conducted by brigadier Sutton. During the march, the duke led the van, at the head of 50 squadrons of the left wing. At break of day an express, dispatched by Cadogan, reached him, with intelligence, that he and general Hompesch had crossed the causeway without opposition, at Aubanchoeil-au-bac, about three in the morning, and *were in actual possession* of the enemy's lines, with 22 battalions and 2000 horse, composed partly of the detachments previously sent from the camp, and partly from garrisons in the rear. The general received the welcome intelligence while in the act of leading the van of the horse, in anxious expectation. He instantly sent orders to every regi-

ment of infantry to accelerate their march, and to the right wing of horse, which closed the rear, to bring up the fatigued and stragglers, and pushed on at a trot with his 50 squadrons to join Cadogan. The news spreading rapidly through the columns, all were animated with fresh ardour; and even the lukewarm and envious could not restrain their admiration.

About eleven at night, Villars received the first intelligence of their rapid march, but was so completely confused by the complicated movements of his great antagonist, that he still confidently anticipated an immediate engagement. He considered the march only as a manœuvre preparatory to a vigorous attack, either upon his lines at Avesne le Compte, or on his left, where the alarm excited by the corps of light cavalry that had swept round Sacé in the evening, had induced marshal Montesquiou, who commanded that wing, to send notice that he was menaced with an attack in the morning. Uncertain what to expect, he kept his troops under arms, in readiness for marching. At two in the morning, more specific intelligence arriving, the french marshal put himself at the head of the household troops, who were with him on the right, and pushing on at full speed, ordered the infantry to follow without delay.

In the mean time, Marlborough had reached the important post, Aubanchoeil-au-bac, before eight in the morning, where his field-train had arrived; and as his cavalry rapidly passed the Sanzet, he placed them in order of battle, on the opposite side of the river. When sufficient numbers had

formed, he extended his right towards the abbey du Verger. Other bridges were laid across the river at Pallue, by means of which, the right wing of infantry and cavalry had a shorter route to the new position. The outposts advanced to the morass of Marquion, and masked the defilé of Saulchy.

During these arrangements, Villars advanced with such rapidity that he gradually dropt his corps of cavalry, till scarcely one hundred of the best-mounted remained. Mortified by disappointment, and impatient to know the real state of affairs, he pushed through the defilé of Saulchy, without the necessary precautions, and was soon surrounded by the allied outposts. Perceiving their intention to charge, he directed the dragoons to fly to the castle of Oisy, and while the allies pursued them, he, with two attendants only, escaped through an opening unheeded. The escort surrendered without firing a shot. In this extremity, he met 20 squadrons coming up to the defilé. It was now ten in the morning, and the head of his right wing of cavalry was approaching; but by this time the columns of the allied infantry were perceived marching in a parallel direction, on the other side of the Sanzet, and soon afterwards turning into the pass of Arleux, and crossing the river at Pallue. At eleven, a considerable body had formed line, stretching from Oisy towards Espinoy. Notwithstanding the numbers who sunk from fatigue, in a forced march of sixteen hours, over an extent of thirty-six miles, intersected by several rivers, the right wing of the allied infantry

had entered the new ground, by four in the afternoon; and, before dark, the whole position was occupied, from Oisy to beyond the mill of Abancourt, towards the Scheld.

About this period, the first infantry of the french army, in five columns, approaching, Villars halted them in rear of the defilé, and, on the morning of the 6th, turned off the great road towards Bourlon, and began likewise to place his troops in order of battle, with the right on the Scheld, behind Cambray, the centre in the wood of Bourlon, and the left at the marsh of Sains sur Marquion.

By his masterly movements, Marlborough had now accomplished his great design. Villars was severely mortified; he could not prevent the siege of either Cambray, Bouchain, or Valenciennes, unless he took post behind the right bank of the Scheld, towards Bouchain, from whence he could succour the one or the other; but by this movement he uncovered Arras, a place of still greater importance. Over-reached in military skill, he endeavoured to foil one stratagem by another, and lure Marlborough to a battle, by drawing him round the cannon of Cambray. But his opponent would not fall into the snare; for as he had gained his object without a battle, a victory could bring little advantage, and he was enabled to carry into effect the remainder of his plan without *obstruction.

The dutch deputies, who had hitherto always deprecated a battle, were now urgent for an attack, and the disaffected were, or pretended to be,

* Hist. des Guerres de la Revolution, tom. i.

alarmed, at the consequences of so bold and rapid a movement; but Marlborough was not to be diverted by clamours or importunities, and firmly waited the arrival of the fatigued troops and rear guard. Being apprised that the enemy were moving from their first position to that of Bourlon, he conjectured that Villars would cross the Scheld, in order to frustrate his ulterior operation. He therefore summoned a council of war, and unfolded the remainder of his plan; he composed the alarms of the timid, and restrained the rashness of those who advised an immediate attack in the exhausted state of the army. Villars, he urged, was moved to a field so contracted and covered, that no attempt could be made either on his flanks or centre, without the risk of utter defeat. He added, should he withdraw behind the Scheld, the only operation, which could be undertaken, would be the siege of Arras, a fortress too strong and extensive to be reduced with a limited force; and, therefore, he proposed the investment of Bouchain, pledging himself to pass the Scheld, and accomplish the enterprise. The same persons, indeed, who wished to risk a hazardous battle, combated this prudent resolution; but he had given so many and such recent proofs of his superiority in skill and judgment, that the whole council acquiesced in his opinion.

At the rising of the council, therefore, the army advanced almost within cannon-shot in front of Cambray, and halted about noon; and this movement had the effect of preventing Villars from attempting, as he had meditated, the passage of

the Scheld. While the enemy were held in check, eight pontoon bridges were expeditiously thrown across the river below Etrun, and the whole army facing to the left, occasionally saluted by the cannon of Cambray, marched by lines along the heights, their rear being covered with all the grenadiers, and 40 squadrons, under general Ross. At six, the left wing began to cross the river; the rear guard, which occupied the heights, and the grenadiers, posted in Etrun and the roman camp, near the village, frustrated the attempts of the enemy to obstruct the movement. Convinced that the allied forces would have crossed the river before the morning, Villars remained quietly in his camp, and suffered them, without molestation, to proceed to the investment of Bouchain, which he hoped to be able to relieve.

These masterly manœuvres excited the admiration of all candid and competent judges, and we find a few lines of congratulation from Eugene.

"*Muhlberg, Aug.* 17. — I received yesterday evening your highness's letter of the 6th instant. You are fully convinced, I trust, that no person takes a greater interest in your concerns than myself. Your highness has penetrated into the *non plus ultra.* I sincerely hope that the siege of Bouchain, contrary to the custom of our engineers, will not last long. If marshal Villars has the consent of his court, perhaps he will make his appearance in the field; but as he has taken his position, I do not think he will attack you. If he can make any diversion, he will not fail to attempt it; but it will be difficult. From hence I have

nothing to communicate, except that the rains and inundations detain me in this camp without forage."

Notwithstanding the extraordinary success which the great commander had obtained with such limited means, his conduct did not escape censure, not merely from his enemies and detractors, but even from some of his well-wishers, who were incompetent judges of the art of war. The pensionary, deceived by the reports of the dutch deputies, blamed his timidity, in not risking an engagement; and from the court of Vienna similar complaints were heard.

It could not be expected that among the british ministers, who were interested to decry his exploits, such an opportunity for cavil should be lost; and, therefore, we find St. John enquiring of Cadogan the reasons which induced the general to decline an engagement, and, in his correspondence with Drummond, peevishly observing, "My spirit is not damped by this *contre-tems*, if such it was; I only apprehend that before the siege of Bouchain is over, we may be obliged to fight at greater disadvantage, than we might have done in the course of the late event." *

Marlborough, vexed at these unjust imputations, vindicated his conduct in a letter to the secretary, which is preserved in the State Paper Office, and printed in Somerville. † At the same time, he

* Aug. 7. 1711, vol. i. p. 298.

† Somerville's Queen Anne, p. 646. We have not deemed it necessary to print this letter, because the arguments are exactly similar to those in his epistle to count Zinzendorf.

sent a similar justification to his friend, count Zinzendorf, for the satisfaction of the court of Vienna.

" *Camp before Bouchain, Aug.* 20. — In reply, sir, to your enquiry into the motives which induced me not to engage the enemy, I could answer in one word, *impossibility*. But, in compliance with your wishes, I have the honour to inform you, that the same day in which we passed the lines, marshal Villars appeared at the head of his army, behind the morass of Marquion. He encamped there that night, and the next day continued his march, in four columns, towards Cambray, covered by the marsh which extends to the village of Inchy, a league and a half from Cambray; so that his troops, passing the village, formed on the right towards that town, behind the villages of Sailly and Rolencourt, and the hollow roads and ravines with which the country abounds. His right thus rested on Cambray, his centre was covered by those two villages, with the hollow roads, and his left by the marsh of Inchy. Hence you see, that in this situation it was impracticable for us to attack him, and we had no other measures to take, than first to pass the Scheld, lest he should anticipate us, by crossing and taking post on the other side, in our front, by which movement we should have been deprived of all the advantage of our passage of the lines, and should have been obliged to retrograde by the way we came, after consuming the little forage which that corner afforded. I might add to what is stated in the Paris Gazette of the 14th, under the head of Cambray

in which it is pretended that a heavy rain prevented the battle on the 6th, that we profited by the darkness of the ensuing night to pass the Scheld, and that count Broglio was detached to occupy the post of Denain; — I say in answer to these fictions, that not a drop of rain fell on the army during the whole day, nor until night; that our bridges were made over the Scheld at eleven in the morning, and the army was on the march by two in the afternoon, the greater part having passed before dark. With regard to the post of Denain, we occupied it in the first instance, and have since kept it, nor have the enemy made the slightest attempt to dislodge us. You thus see what credit is to be given to this common rumour, and if any one among us has given rise to it, this must have been for want of being better informed.

" God be thanked, we have succeeded in closing the communication between the army of M. Villars and the town of Bouchain, and in two or three days we shall open the trenches." *

Marlborough had the satisfaction to find that his arguments weighed with the court of Vienna, and drew from Zinzendorf a candid avowal that he had been misled by erroneous statements. He was no less gratified to learn, that his explanation had removed the unfavourable impressions entertained by secretary St. John, who paid a candid and honourable tribute to the merit of the great commander, in a letter to his friend, Mr. Drummond: " I look upon the progress which the duke of

* Translation from the french original, in the possession of count Zinzendorf, communicated by the archduke John.

Marlborough has lately made, to be really honourable to him, and mortifying to the enemy. The event cannot be ascribed to superior numbers, or to any accident; it is owing to genius and conduct. The present situation of the army seems to promise a decisive action." *

* For the account of these military operations have been consulted and compared, the MS. Correspondence; — The accounts in the Gazettes; — The Lives of Marlborough and Eugene; — Boyer's Life of Queen Anne; — The History of Europe; — Brodrick; — Kane; — and Milner; also, the french writers, particularly Villars; — Quincy; — Rousset; — Traité de Fortification de St. Paul; — Histoire des Guerres de la Revolution.

CHAPTER 103.

1711.

Operations for the investment of Bouchain. — Obstacles encountered in the progress and conclusion of the line of circumvallation. — Correspondence. — Termination of the siege. — Generous conduct of the british commander towards Fenelon, archbishop of Cambray.

Having thus baffled the defensive combinations of the enemy, and anticipated them in the passage of the Scheld, the next object was, to complete the investment of Bouchain; an enterprise of no less difficulty than the preceding movements, as it was to be accomplished, amidst local obstacles of no ordinary kind, and in face of an army superior in force.

At ten at night, the left wing of infantry, which closed the line of march, crossed the Scheld, over pontoons taken from the enemy by surprise. The weather changing in the evening, the troops were drenched in rain, but, soon after midnight, reached the plain of Avesnes le Sec, and lay under arms till morning; while a strong piquet was posted at the mill of Ivry, to watch the motions of the enemy. About eight, the active general roused his benumbed and shivering soldiers; and continuing his march by the left, formed in order of battle on the plain stretching from Douchy to Haspres, the left and centre covered by the Selle,

and the right thrown back in rear of Houdain. All the posts on the Sanzet were recalled, and a body of grenadiers alone left in the camp of Cæsar, on the left of the Scheld, to cover three bridges which still remained. At six in the evening, being threatened by a strong detachment of hostile cavalry, this force was also withdrawn, and a body of infantry advancing on the opposite side of the river, amused the enemy with a heavy cannonade, while the pontoons were removed.

In this manner was Bouchain invested; yet obstacles of no trivial nature were still to be overcome. The Sanzet divides the town into two parts, and, in conjunction with the Scheld, which skirts a large hornwork towards the east, produces a copious inundation, filling the ditches, which are both broad and deep. The enemy, posted between the Sanzet and Scheld, could either introduce supplies through the inundation, or, by traversing the Sanzet, could maintain a communication with the place on the west. The original garrison of eight battalions, commanded by M. de Selve, was reinforced by 600 swiss, who, under count d'Affry, traversed the inundation in the night, and by a second body of 500 grenadiers, under M. de Ravignon. Money and ammunition sufficient for the defence were also introduced. On the 6th, preparations were made by Villars for throwing bridges across the Sanzet at Aubanchoeil and Wannes; and, having called reinforcements from St. Omer, Ypres, and other quarters, he moved to the very ground which the allies had just quitted. Here he pitched camp in the angle between the

Sanzet and the Scheld; his centre was placed at Etrun, while his left extended along the Sanzet to Tressies, and his right along the Scheld, to Neuville St. Remy, on the glacis of Cambray.

Marlborough did not allow the enemy time to profit by the advantages of their situation; for he had no sooner reached Avesnes le Sec, than he ordered bridges to be thrown across the Scheld at Neuville, below Bouchain; and passing over with 60 squadrons, took post on the hill of Vignonette, near Wannes-au-bac. He thus covered the convoy of baggage and bread waggons, which, under an escort of 2000 horse, commanded by general Wood, was safely conducted from Douay; and anticipated the preparations of the enemy to establish themselves on the farther bank of the Sanzet.

Villars, however, appreciated too well the advantage of a double communication with the town, to desist from his purpose. Before day-light of the 9th, he detached 30 battalions across the Sanzet, under the command of general Albergotti, who immediately began to construct an intrenchment, which was to commence from the inundation at Wavrechin, and forming an angle on the top of the hill above Marquette, to be carried back to the Sanzet at Wannes-au-bac. This work and the batteries of Bouchain would sweep the intermediate ground with a cross-fire.

Marlborough was fully aware that the enemy, if suffered to accomplish their undertaking, would effectually mar his design. He therefore selected 31 battalions and 12 squadrons to complete the investment, under general Fagel; and detached

general Collier, and lord North and Grey, with 42 squadrons and 30 battalions, across the Scheld in the night, to interrupt the operations of the enemy. A thick fog covered the advance of this body till near seven in the morning, when they had approached within cannon-shot of the hostile intrenchments. A signal of three guns was then fired upon an outpost in the village of Marquette, which immediately retired, and the allies approached the works. Lord North and Grey, who led the van, was on the point of advancing to the attack; when the commander-in-chief, who had himself traversed the Scheld before day-light, rode forward, and ordered a halt. He had fortunately discovered a large body of infantry concealed behind the height, and soon ascertained that Montesquiou, with 60 battalions, had been secretly detached by Villars to sustain Albergotti, who was acquainted with the intended enterprise.

At this moment, an alarm of another kind was given, by signal guns fired from the great camp at Avesnes le Sec; for Villars adroitly profiting by the division of the allied forces, had crossed the Scheld, with the rest of his army, near Ramilies, and advancing to the ravine of Naves, began to extend his line along the rivulet near Ivry. Thus menaced, and baffled on both points, the british general was compelled to relinquish his purpose; and ordering the troops to withdraw, with all speed, from the fire of the intrenchment, which now opened, he returned in haste to the camp beyond the Scheld. Villars having foiled his antagonist, resumed likewise his former position.

Marlborough was sensible that he could not accomplish his purpose, while his camp beyond the Scheld was exposed. He therefore ordered the front from Haspres to Ivry to be covered by a line of redoubts and lunettes, which were mounted with cannon. This work being completed in two days, he again crossed the Scheld with 50 battalions and 52 squadrons. Perceiving that the enemy were rapidly improving and extending their works, he ordered the line of circumvallation to be immediately commenced in the middle space between their intrenchments and the town. Accordingly, 4000 workmen were employed during the night of the 11th, in constructing a line which began at Mastaigne, and stretched to the right, across the road from Valenciennes towards the Lower Scheld. Behind, a competent force, under general Collier, and lord North and Grey, encamped for their protection.

Having prescribed the direction of the lines, Marlborough left the superintendence to general Cadogan, under whose inspection it was carried on by colonel Armstrong, deputy quarter-master, with equal ability and success. The ensuing morning was marked by a memorable occurrence. Cadogan riding to reconnoitre at the head of a few squadrons, perceived marshal Villars, who, with an escort of four squadrons of carabineers, and one of hussars, was advancing for the same purpose. A warm skirmish ensuing between the two parties, the carabineers were routed with the loss of a brigadier, the major, and above 50 troopers, and the marshal himself with difficulty escaped.

The day was employed in completing and carrying the line of circumvallation on the right, towards Lorche, on the Lower Scheld. At night, colonel Armstrong silently advanced with a strong escort to the height above Marquette, and commenced a new work across the road from Bouchain to Douay, intending to continue it to the Upper Scheld, between the enemy's post and Bouchain. He proceeded without interruption; but at daylight he discovered that Albergotti had endeavoured to anticipate him by commencing three redoubts between Wavrechin and the town. The duke, who was apprised of the circumstance, instantly ordered a detachment of infantry, with twenty pieces of cannon, to dislodge the enemy, and, to prevent farther interruption, reinforced the troops beyond the Scheld to 70 battalions and 100 squadrons. At night, notwithstanding a heavy fire, both from the town and the hostile intrenchments, the circumvallation was continued to the inundation of the Sanzet, including the unfinished redoubts taken from the enemy. The obstructions encountered in these preliminary operations alarmed the dutch deputies, and they now pressed for the relinquishment of the siege with as much earnestness as they had recently displayed for an ill-timed engagement. To their appeal we find an allusion in a letter to Godolphin.

" *Aug.* 13. — I desired lady Marlborough to make my excuses for not writing by the last post to thank you for yours of the 23d. The increase of the enemy's army, by their draining their garrisons from all places, as also recalling the troops

they had sent under the command of the count D'Estaing into Brabant, gives them so great a superiority, that the deputies thought it proper to advise with their general how far it might be practicable to persist in the attempting the siege of Bouchain. The greatest number of them thought the difficulties we should meet with could hardly be overcome. However, we are taking the necessary steps for the siege; we are intrenching ourselves, as the enemy do on their side, so that should we, as I hope in God we shall, succeed, it still will be a very tedious work, if we can be so happy as to be masters of this place.

"14*th*. — Having wrote thus far, I was informed of the marshal de Villars being come out of his intrenchments with a considerable body of horse and foot, and that he was working at three redoubts, in order to have communication with Bouchain from his retrenchment. It was dark before I could get near him, so that he had the advantage of working all night; but as soon as day broke, and he saw we were in earnest to attack him, he quitted his three redoubts, and retired into his retrenchments. I think he may again attempt the same thing this night, so that I am going to bed in hopes of getting some sleep."

Foiled in the struggle beyond the Sanzet, Villars became doubly anxious to maintain his communication with the garrison, through the inundation. For this purpose, he had raised a battery at Etrun, to command a part of the adjoining morass. On the 10th, he introduced a reinforcement of 200 fusileers, who filed along a small dam between the

two rivers, and, during the night, 400 sacks of flour, and a quantity of ammunition, were thrown into the town by the same channel. He now endeavoured to fortify this communication by means of fascines laid in the form of a breast-work, attached to an avenue of willow-trees which skirted the dam, although the water was in many places four feet deep.

On the morning of the 15th the enemy were still discovered at work, and, notwithstanding a heavy cross-fire from both banks, they persevered in their labours. Behind the dam was a cattle track, called *Le Sentier aux Vaches*, which was raised with fascines wherever the water was deep, and barred by a small traverse in the centre. To protect this work, a corps of troops was posted on the verge of the morass.

The persevering activity of the british general did not long leave even this resource to his opponent. On the 16th a fascine road was commenced across the morass, by the joint labours of the troops on both sides of the two rivers; and, in the evening, 600 british and dutch grenadiers, sustained by eight battalions of infantry, under the direction of Cadogan, resolutely advanced against four companies of french grenadiers, who were stationed on the Cow-path, and supported by the brigade Du Roi. This daring band waded several hundred yards up to the middle, and sometimes to the shoulders in water, without firing a shot; and, after receiving a volley from the enemy, carried the post with the loss of only six men. On this occasion a young ensign of the regiment of Ingoldsby

distinguished himself; for being short of stature, and unable to ford the water, he mounted on the shoulders of a grenadier, and, with his gallant supporter, was among the first to reach the traverse. Two companies of french grenadiers were intercepted and driven into Bouchain, and the allies secured their advantage by carrying a breast-work, and completing the road, about a mile in length, across the inundation, from camp to camp.

On the 19th, several sallies made by the besieged were repulsed, and the next day the investment was completed. On the 21st, the heavy battering train and stores arrived from Tournay, under a strong escort, after repelling a spirited attack near St. Amand from the garrisons of Condé and Valenciennes.

These operations, together with the proceedings of the siege, are specified in several letters to Godolphin.

" *Aug.* 17. — I have this day received the favour of yours of the 30th of the last month. I do wish, with all my heart, that the malicious report of our having beaten the enemy could have been true.

" We were on Thursday near enough for ignorant people to have judged that we might have fought; but the ground made it impossible. We have not yet quite overcome our difficulties, though we have forced them from several posts; they have none left but a path called the Cow-path, through a great bog, at which they can pass only one in front. We have several pieces of cannon

that fire on the passage, and we are also endeavouring to make ourselves masters of it, and then we shall shut the town up on all sides. It is most certain that if we had now the german troops we might make them very uneasy, and, I fear, they will not be able to do much on the Rhine, though the french have been obliged to send both horse and foot from thence to the duke of Berwick. If we can succeed in this siege, we shall have the honour of having done it in the face of an army many thousand men stronger than we are. The constant fatigues, and the having got cold in my head gives me great uneasiness all about my left ear, for which I am advised to make a blister; but as I intend to sweat this night, and not stir out tomorrow, I hope that may carry the pain off, which has been for these ten last days very uneasy."

"*Aug.* 20. — I think I may now assure you, that our greatest difficulties for the siege of Bouchain are over, we having obliged the french to quit their posts which hindered our investing the place. They are now shut up on all sides; and as soon as we can get our cannon and ammunition, we shall open the trenches, which will be at three several attacks, hoping by that to reduce the place much sooner. We are informed of the enemy's making magazines at Maubeuge, so that they may be able to act by diversion. As soon as they shall march that way, I shall reinforce the garrisons of Mons and Bruxelles. My head is far from being well, but I thank God I am more at ease than when I wrote my last."

"*Aug.* 27. — We continue our application fo

the bringing every thing that we may want during this siege; so that the body of foot which are employed at the three attacks, and the horse which we are yet obliged to send out to secure our convoys, makes the whole in perpetual motion; but I hope in four or five days we shall have all in our camp, and about the same time our batteries will be ready to fire. We have now, I thank God, very fine weather, which will be a great blessing if it continues. By my letters from Mr. Chetwood, I fear there will not be much more done on that side; and prince Eugene complains of their wants; so that though his army is strong, he gives no hopes of being able to do any thing; however, I have desired him so to act, as that they might not be able to send any detachments into this country."

"*Sept.* 3. — Since my last the marshal de Villars attempted two of our quarters, but miscarried in both. His whole army is now employed in making and carrying of * and by the batteries he has raised against us, it looks as if his thoughts were wholly employed for the forcing our communication over the morass. We are hard at work to prevent it. As long as the siege lasts, we must expect he will use his best endeavours to trouble us. The comte d'Arback, a lieut.-general of the dutch, was taken at their last forage; he is the first lieut.-general that has been taken of this army during this war. The situation of both armies is so extraordinary, that our army which attacks the town is bombarded

* A word omitted, or illegible.

by the enemy; and we have several posts so near to each other that the sentinels have conversations. The whole french army being so camped that they are seen by the garrison of Bouchain, makes the defence the more obstinate; but, with the blessing of God, I hope we shall get the better of them, and, if they opiniatre beyond reason, may be an argument for their being made prisoners of war. The Spa waters, which I am persuaded would do me good, I find I must not think of taking till the siege be over. I hope in my next we may be able to guess how long this siege may last."

Among the letters addressed to the duke during the siege, we find one from prince Eugene, in reply to his request for advice.

"*Muhlberg, Aug.* 24. — I received yesterday your highness's letter of the 15th, and I return you many thanks for the detail you have been so kind as to send me of your operations since the passage of the lines. I doubt not but your fatigue must have been excessive during the march, and some repose is absolutely necessary for the recovery of your health. If the line of circumvallation is now finished, (as your highness informs me it was nearly done,) and, consequently, all communication intercepted between the town and the new intrenchment of the enemy, I flatter myself that marshal Villars will have the mortification to witness the capture of this important fortress, which will increase the glory of the enterprise.

"Your highness has acted judiciously in placing your intrenched camp on the other side of the Scheld, and to be prepared against any movements

which the enemy may make in the course of the siege. I am of opinion that your highness ought to spare no pains to strengthen your intrenchments on both sides of the river as much as possible, so that they may be defended with fewer troops, and that the remainder may be employed wherever it may be necessary. This being executed, nothing more remains to be done than to press the siege, collect forage, and secure the convoy; and, from what I know of yours and the enemy's situation, this appears to be practicable. Your highness will please to excuse this liberty, which I have only taken in obedience to your commands, and to the desire you have been pleased to express of knowing my sentiments. I trust I need not repeat that no one is more interested than I am, in what concerns you, or wishes you more success in the remainder of the campaign, which may contribute to a good peace.

"From hence I can only repeat that the inundations still detain us in this camp, and that our cavalry is in danger of perishing for want of forage. * * * * *

"As to the proceedings at Frankfort, with which you are desirous to be acquainted, the sessions will not assemble till to-morrow, under various pretexts. It is, however, asserted that the election will take place on the 20th of September; but I suspend my belief until I see how the first meetings have passed; for, to say the truth, it appears to me that the vicars and the grand chancellor of the empire are endeavouring to prolong the interregnum. But I say this confidentially."

In the midst of these military operations, his heart yearned towards his native country; and we find him anxiously expressing his sanguine wishes for the completion of the building at Blenheim, and his hopes that government would not fail to accomplish the works, in conformity with the promise of the queen.

To Lord Godolphin.

"*Aug.* 30. — Lady Marlborough has let me know that my friends are of opinion, I suppose she means you, that I should let the court govern the finishing of Blenheim. It has been always my opinion; however, I should be glad if lord Rialton would go down thither for three or four days, and incline them to do all that is possible without doors as long as the season continues good; but after that is done, they should lose no time in employing the remainder of the money in finishing within doors, which may be done in the winter. I have had very great expressions and assurances from lord Oxford. The finishing this building is the favour I shall, at my coming home, desire of him; for I have no ambition left, nor desire, indeed, but that of seeing this house finished, and that I might live quietly some few years in it with my friends. I think you have taken a right resolution in not advancing any money on this twenty thousand pounds, and in the winter I may have time to take measures with you what may be the most reasonable method for the carrying on this work, it being the only favour I shall ask or expect from the government. The enemy's superiority makes us almost every day meet with difficulties, but I

have good reason to hope the siege will end to my satisfaction. I am ever, most faithfully, yours."

The grand obstacle to the prosecution of the siege being removed by the occupation of the dyke and the works in the inundation, as well as by the safe arrival of the heavy artillery, no events of importance occurred, except the surprise of an allied detachment at Houdain, in which four battalions suffered severely, and the prussian minister, Bourke, was taken prisoner, and the dispersion of some foragers, under an escort of seven squadrons, with the loss of a general and some officers, and the capture of twelve standards. Nor is it necessary to dwell on an unsuccessful attempt of Albergotti to surprise Douay.

These inconsiderable incidents had no effect on the operations of the siege. By the 8th of September the allies had carried on their approaches so far as to occupy the first counterscarp; and, by the 11th, two of the principal bastions were abandoned, and the breaches rendered practicable. On the 14th, after some ineffectual attempts to obtain a more honourable capitulation, the garrison, reduced to 3100 men, including sick and wounded, surrendered prisoners of war, the officers preserving their swords and baggage.

Marlborough announces this event in a letter to Godolphin, dated Sept. 14.

"I am sure you will be very well pleased with the good news I send by Collins, of our being masters of Bouchain, and that the marshal de Villars has done us the honour of being witness of

the garrisons being made prisoners of war. They consist of eight battalions and 500 swiss. I was in hopes lord Stair might have been here before this, so that I might, by this messenger, have answered your letter by him. The french, notwithstanding their superiority, burn all their forage in their power, in order to make our subsistence difficult. I intend to go out with a body of horse, to see if subsistence can be had about Quesnoy; for that place would be of great advantage to us; for, if it be practicable, I would yet, this campaign, attack that place. I find by a letter from Mr. Craggs, that the earl of Oxford does not think the clerks of the Treasury are proper persons for the passing the accounts of Blenheim. I could wish they were of the commission; but if that can't be, I beg you will instruct Mr. Craggs those that may be the next best, for I would be glad to have that matter settled. I fear the duke of Savoy's army is by this time returned to Piedmont, and prince Eugene has acquainted me with the impossibility of his being able to do any thing on the Rhine, so that I do not doubt of the french bringing troops from thence hither. I have directed Collins to give you notice before he leaves London."

After filling up the ditches, and repairing the breaches, a fort was constructed, by order of the general, at the angle formed by the junction of the Sanzet and Scheld, as well to secure the communication between Bouchain and Douay, as to obstruct the investment of Bouchain, should the marshal attempt to retake it.

The two armies remained in their respective positions; that of the allies to preserve a fortress which broke the connection of their formidable lines; while the enemy, to oppose the further enterprises of the british general, retained their posts with the bridges over the Sanzet and Scheld. *

We are gratified in laying before the reader an anecdote of our great commander, which shews that his respect for men of piety and learning was not lost in his ardour for military glory.

The character of Fenelon, archbishop of Cambray, is too well known to need any delineation. The estates of his see being exposed to the plunder of the troops, Marlborough ordered a detachment to guard the magazines of corn at Château Cambresis, and gave a safe-conduct for their conveyance to Cambray; and when even this protection, in consequence of the scarcity of bread, was not likely to be respected by the soldiery, he sent a corps of dragoons, with waggons, to transport the grain, and escort it to the precincts of the town. Thus did our illustrious general pay homage to the christian philosopher, who honoured letters by his genius, religion by his piety, France by his renown, and human nature by his amiable virtues †; and thus did he, in his conduct towards the author

* For the operations of the investment and siege of Bouchain have been consulted, besides the Correspondence and the articles in the Gazette, the principal authorities enumerated in the preceding chapter, particularly the different lives of Marlborough; — Memoires de Villars; — Kane and Milner.

† Vie de Marlborough, vol. iii. p. 322.

of Telemachus, imitate Alexander, at the capture of Thebes, when, in the language of our sublime poet,

> " The great Emathian conqueror bid spare
> " The house of Pindarus, when temple and tower
> " Went to the ground."——

MILTON, *Sonnet VIII.*

CHAPTER 104.

1711.

Marlborough proposes to besiege Quesnoy, and to make preparations for the winter cantonments of the army in Flanders. — Continuation of the correspondence with lord treasurer Oxford. —Sends lord Stair to London, to promote a more cordial understanding with the minister, and to disclose his project for the capture of Bouchain and Quesnoy, and the invasion of France in the ensuing spring. — Return of lord Stair, and duplicity of Oxford. — Progress and result of the secret negotiation with France. — Continuation of the correspondence. — Marlborough deceived by the ministers.—Compelled to abandon his project. — Close of the campaign. — Elevation of Charles to the throne of the empire. — State of the war in Spain, on the Rhine, and on the side of the Alps.

After the capture of Bouchain, Marlborough was anxious to commence, without delay, the siege of Quesnoy, which was the next operation in the intended project. With this view, he had sent proposals to the dutch government, for the purpose of pressing them to co-operate vigorously in the necessary preparations, and to contribute their proportion of the expence.

This project continues to be the prominent feature in the interesting correspondence, which we now resume; and we find the treasurer entering into every detail, for the supply of the necessary

charges attendant on the siege, as well as of forage and magazines, for the winter subsistence of the troops in Flanders.

From Lord Oxford.

" My lord ; *July* 31.–*August* 11.

" On Saturday night Mr. Sutton arrived at Windsor, and gave me the honour of your grace's letter, and also the most agreeable news of your grace's having passed the lines, upon which I most heartily congratulate you ; and I no way doubt but as your grace has signalised your conduct in obtaining this advantage, so you will improve it to the utmost for the common good. Mr. Secretary St. John has orders to write to lord Orrery, according to lord Stair's proposal, for facilitating the project, but it is in such a manner that his lordship will not be able to guess at the project ; but the pretence is taken from your grace investing of Bouchain. As to the provision for the magazines, I desire your grace will let me know how much money must be advanced, and I will immediately take care to have it remitted. I will consult my lord Stair, and what farther he thinks necessary to be done, in pursuance of your grace's directions, I will not fail to do my utmost to expedite the same. I can make your grace no return of news from hence, for the good news you sent us. The queen has not pitched upon a person to have the privy seal, and, I believe, is not determined in her own mind as yet. On Sunday colonel Killigrew arrived here from Spain, with letters from the duke of Argyle, who seems to be very uneasy there ; and there are complaints that money is wanting, not-

withstanding the very great sums which have been remitted for that service, which I fear have been applied to pay old debts which were never allowed; and, in the mean time, the soldiers were left to shift for themselves. But the truth of this will best appear, when the commissioners are there, who are to inspect the state of that army. I know your grace is in a great hurry at this time, therefore I will interrupt you no longer, than to assure you that I do most heartily wish you all imaginable success, and am," &c.

Reply of the Duke.

" *Aug.* 20. — I was very well assured the good news I sent your lordship by Mr. Sutton would give you a great deal of satisfaction, and 'tis no less to me, to understand by the honour of your letter of the 31st past, that you do me the justice to believe, I shall use my utmost endeavours to improve the advantage we have gained, for the service of her majesty and the common good. I cannot yet give your lordship a final answer about the sum to be advanced for providing magazines. You will see by the memorial of the council of state at the Hague, and my answer to it, which I send by this post to Mr. Secretary St. John, the difficulties that still remain on that side. We are not yet agreed what number of troops shall be kept on this frontier; but as I am stedfastly of opinion, following the coercive project is the most likely means of bringing the enemy to reason, it will, consequently, be necessary to have as many troops together as possibly we can, to assure the execution of it. However, the money to be

advanced, at the largest computation, will not amount to more than double the sum that was paid last for the like service.

" We have met with many difficulties in the investing of Bouchain, which, however, is at last effected. We have cut off the enemy's last hopes of keeping a communication with the town, and are now preparing to carry on the siege in form. I hope we shall be ready to break ground in three days. Your lordship knows the taking this place is a considerable article in the project. The siege, as far as it depends upon me, shall be pushed on with all possible vigour; and I do not altogether despair, but that from the success of this campaign we may hear of some advances made towards what we so much desire; and I shall esteem it much the happiest part of my life, if I can be instrumental in putting a good end to the war, which grows so burthensome to our country, as well as to our allies. I am, with truth," &c.

From Lord Oxford.

" My lord; *Aug.* 14.–25.

" I received last night the honour of your grace's letter of the 20th instant, and do heartily rejoice that you are like to meet with so good success in the siege. Will not the enemy make some guess at the intended project by this siege? I suppose lord Stair will think of returning the beginning of the next week, and by him I shall do myself the honour to write largely to your grace, as well as to speak freely to him. I am very desirous to settle the whole remittance for the campaign in Flanders this week, if it be possible, that I may have leisure

for other affairs. I find the town is full of complaints from the army, about Mr. Sweet's * not continuing the payment as formerly. If I was not sure that your grace is too full of business, I would write at large about Spain; if that war be not put upon another foot, it will entirely consume us, and the success answer nothing. They do nothing but make loud complaints, and yet have received their full money to Christmas next, within a hundred and odd thousand pounds. And as to Portugal, lord Portmore says, he is assured, that the last fruitless campaign was concerted between the french and the portuguese, who, notwithstanding all their clamour, about their sufferings on the frontier of Elvas, the french did them not the least damage. I will add no more, but to beseech your grace to accept the assurance, that I am, with the most perfect respect," &c.

On reviewing the preceding correspondence, the reader will scarcely believe, that the minister who could manifest such zeal for the prosecution of the war, was deliberately deceiving the general, and had, at this moment, brought the secret negotiation with France nearly to a conclusion. Such, however, is the fact; and it is impossible to conceive how much farther he might have carried his duplicity, had not an unexpected incident excited suspicions of his double dealing.

To answer the amicable overtures from the french monarch, Prior had been sent in secrecy and disguise, for the purpose of establishing a

* Deputy to the paymaster of the british forces, resident at Amsterdam, and the duke of Marlborough's confidential agent.

direct communication between the two courts. During a stay of six weeks, he had brought the preliminaries to consistence, and was returning with the same secrecy as he departed, in company with Mesnager, and the secretary of Torcy, when he was arrested by the mayor of Deal; and, for want of regular passports, he and his companions were detained as spies. The disclosure of his name, and the delivery of the secretary's warrant, procured his liberation; but the transaction could not be concealed, and the information which was conveyed from England, appears to have induced Marlborough to request some information of what was passing. The ensuing letter shews the affectation of candour, with which the wily treasurer endeavoured to lull his suspicions. It needs no farther comment.

" My lord; *Sept.* 5.–16.

" Before this comes to your grace's hands, I hope you will be master of Bouchain, and I no ways doubt but that your grace will make the best use of that little which remains of the campaign, for the prosecuting what you have so wisely projected and so much to your own honour carried on thus far. Lord Stair will inform your grace of the little accidents which have detained him for some days, and since that, the last week the queen's gout has obliged his waiting for her majesty's letters to your grace. This has been the most regular fit her majesty has had for some years; it is neither attended with pain in her stomach, nor any of those weaknesses which her majesty has been liable to on the like occasion. She is got well enough to be

able to walk with a stick, and is very cheerful and hearty. As to the project lord Stair brought over, your grace knows that it had the queen's approbation, and lord chamberlain writes to you his opinion. As to my part, I desire my actions may shew my approbation, and I will immediately issue such sums of money as you shall judge necessary, for making the requisite magazines.

" And now, my lord, since I must speak of myself, I can say no more than this, that I shall leave it to my actions to speak for me, and so give your grace demonstration that I am the same man towards you, as I was the first day I had the honour of your acquaintance; and I shall as heartily promote every thing under your care, as I did, or would have done, in any time since I have been known to you. I am now to acquaint your grace with a letter I have received this day from Mr. Secretary St. John, whose week it is to stay at Windsor. He says that he has received a letter from Mr. Bothmar, that the elector is apprehensive the danes will take quarters in Bremen; and, he fears, by that, and marching cross his country, they may spread the plague in his territory. To prevent this, the elector desires that some of the horse and dragoons may be allowed to winter in his country. This is so contrary to what your grace projects, that some way must be found to prevent the inconvenience, or to replace what shall be so drawn away; but having spoke at large to lord Stair on that subject, I will trouble you no farther to repeat my discourse, having read thus far of this letter to his lordship.

" I have this moment received the honour of

your grace's letter of Sept. 9. My view in proposing the taking an account was only for your grace's service*; and all the money being issued without account, except such as should be rendered to your grace, it will be only proper for you to name those who shall take that account.

" I have spoke this night so freely to lord Stair on the affairs of Spain and Portugal, and the method of putting that war on a better foot, that I shall not trouble your grace to write what his lordship will better declare by word of mouth.

" Now, as to the affair of peace, which I mentioned in my last, the sum of what is hitherto done is this. Some in Holland having this summer, by divers ways, endeavoured to set on foot a negotiation for peace, and France not being prevailed with to begin with them, sent a proposition directly to England. The queen declared she would enter into no separate treaty, nor would receive any thing she would not transmit to the States. Upon this, they sent a general offer of giving satisfaction to England, to Holland, to the emperor and all the allies, and to give a sureté réel for our commerce; but this being only in generals, it was insisted upon that it should be explained, which they sent one to do, and he is ordered to prepare such a proposition, as may be fit to be transmitted to Holland, which is not yet done. This is the substance of every thing which hath passed. I suppose a very few days will shew whether they are in earnest. This is kept as se-

* This paragraph relates to the appointment of commissioners, for examining the accounts of the expenditure at Blenheim.

cret as it can be, tho' there is not one step taken, which will not speedily be laid open in Holland, when lord Strafford goes over, who is to be married to-morrow to Sir Henry Johnson's daughter. I beseech your grace to believe, that I am, with the most perfect respect," &c.

Reply of the Duke.

" *Camp before Bouchain, Sept.* 17. — Soon after I had dispatched away Collins, with an account of the surrender of Bouchain, I received the honour of your lordship's letter of Aug. 28.–Sept. 8, and am very much obliged to you for the good news you send me of the queen's being so well recovered from her last fit of the gout. As the continuance of her majesty's health is the foundation of all our happiness, 'tis the constant subject of my prayers, and perfect obedience to her commands is the business of my life. I return your lordship many thanks for the advice you are pleased to give me, of the overture made from the french court for a general peace, upon which, till I receive your farther instructions by lord Stair, I can only give you assurance, that, besides the discharge of my duty, nothing in the world can be more agreeable to my inclinations, than to be any way instrumental in the concluding, as soon as possible, such a peace as may be to the satisfaction of her majesty, and the good of my country. And wherever I may be thought serviceable in that important affair, I shall be glad to shew as much zeal as I have endeavoured to do in the prosecution of the war.

" The death of lord Jersey gives me fresh occasion to wish for a speedy end of the war, that I

may enjoy a little repose before my own time comes. I do not doubt but the queen will have all reason to be satisfied with the choice she has made of the bishop of Bristol, who has shewn abroad how fitly he is qualified to do her majesty service at home. I am, with truth, my lord," &c.

While the british general was revolving in his mind the accomplishment of his project, and accelerating the preparations for the siege of Quesnoy, his curiosity could not fail to be excited by the discovery of the mysterious negotiations, as well as by the evasive explanation of the treasurer. He waited with impatience the return of lord Stair, for an explicit description of the state of the cabinet, the progress of the negotiation, and the views of the minister. That nobleman, indeed, returned at this moment, after a stay of more than a month in England. His own honest and indignant language will best describe his reception, and the success of his journey.

" I went to London, and delivered my lord Marlborough's letter to lord Oxford. After many delays, I had at last a very free conference with his lordship, in which he spoke with great freedom and plainness to me. I thought, by all my lord said, our conversation was to have ended in establishing a very good understanding between my lord treasurer and the duke of Marlborough; but his lordship in the end thought fit to say, that he must defer declaring his final resolution upon the whole matter, till our next conversation, which he faithfully promised me should happen in a very few days. The detail of his conversation was ex-

tremely curious, and very well worth your knowledge; but I must delay giving it you at present. If ever we happen to meet, I shall give you a full account of it. From day to day I put my lord Oxford in mind of finishing our conversation, but to no purpose. In the interval Mr. Prior was sent them back from France, which they took to be a *carte blanche* for settling all the differences of Europe; and, in the end, I was allowed to go back to the siege of Bouchain, with a bamboozling letter from my lord Oxford to the duke of Marlborough." *

From Lord Oxford.

" My lord; *Sept.* 11.–22.

" I have just now received the honour of your grace's letter from Mr. Collins of Sept. 14. I do most heartily congratulate your grace's success in the reduction of Bouchain, and I do most sincerely wish your succeeding undertakings may be crowned with the like success. I am sorry to find that the States are so backward to comply with what is necessary for carrying on your grace's project; but I hope lord Albemarle will prevail with them. Lord Stair will have informed your grace of the elector of Hanover's demands, about some part of his troops. Your grace knows the regard which is paid to his electoral highness here, and he having wrote to your grace upon that subject, the secretary is to write to you to manage that affair in the best way not to disoblige the elector, and at the same time not to let it be an example to other

* Continuation of lord Stair's letter to lord Marchmont, Edinburgh, Dec. 10. 1734.

princes, to recall their troops. Nothing farther hath passed in the great affair mentioned in my letter by my lord Stair. I suppose the contrary wind hath kept back the answer expected. * I do again most sincerely congratulate your grace on your good success, and beseech you to accept the assurance, that I am, with the greatest sincerity and most perfect esteem and respect," &c.

The Duke of Marlborough to Lord Oxford.

" My lord; *Sept.* 24.

" In my last I had not time so much as to mention a very material article in the letter lord Stair brought me from your lordship. I have since discoursed very largely upon the subject of it, and am so fully apprised of your opinion of the affairs in Spain and Portugal, and your method of putting that war on a better foot, that there is very little room left for me to add any thing. There might doubtless be many inconveniences removed, by converting that whole expence into subsidies, which would bring it to certainty, save a great number of the queen's subjects, and such troops might be employed as have constitutions better fitted for those climates. The great difficulty will be to find sufficient assurance that the money shall be duly employed to the use for which it is given, in which, however, I should sooner hope for an exact compliance from king Charles, than from the king of Portugal. The former being now become

* Probably alluding to the state of the negotiation, which he still concealed from the duke, although the articles had been arranged, and were on the point of being signed.

head of the councils at Vienna, and master of the revenues, will not be under such pressing necessities as he has been hitherto, and, in all probability, may not want inclination, when he has it in his power, as well to pursue his own point, as to testify some gratitude for what her majesty has done for him; but your lordship is already too well acquainted with the present spirit of the portuguese court, to expect any great good from thence, whatever methods we may take to deserve it from them. After all, your lordship will give me leave to offer my opinion, that whatever is determined, the States should at the same time be pressed not to be any way wanting on their part; for if, when we have done all that can be required of us, there remains the least ground of complaint, tho' the fault should lie at others' doors, we shall be equal sufferers. This letter is longer than I thought when I began it, and is not so much intended for your information as to convince you, that I shall be always ready to give you my thoughts on any subject, when they may be of use; and my actions shall always confirm the truth with which I profess myself to be, my lord," &c.

Strange as it may seem to the candid mind, to observe the duplicity practised by the treasurer, while his schemes were in progress; it must excite still deeper indignation to find him, even after he had sanctioned these fatal preliminaries, assuming the same hypocritical professions, encouraging the general to prosecute his project, and affecting to chide the dutch for their lukewarm and selfish conduct.

From Lord Oxford.

" My lord; *Sept. 25.–Oct. 6.*

" Mr. Drummond being arrived from Holland, I carried him to Windsor, to wait upon the queen, where he had an opportunity of laying before her majesty the opinion of lord Albemarle and the grand pensionary, on the affair of providing forage for the troops, and the additional charge of stables and cazerns, &c. He was not able to name what sum would fall to the share of England; and, indeed, I do believe it would be almost impossible to fix any sum at present. But the queen ordered me to communicate it to the lords, and they being of opinion, that the whole project depends upon the providing of the forage, I am directed to let your grace know, that it is left to your grace to make the best bargain you can, for the queen's proportion, both of the forage and the stabling, &c. In the latter it is to be observed, that the utensils, after the service is over, will remain to the States, which will be considered in the proportion they are to bear in that expence. Being kept late at Windsor, I have not time to enlarge; but I was not willing this post should go, without giving your grace this account, and assuring you, that I am, with the greatest respect," &c.

" My lord; *Sept. 28.–Oct. 9.*

" The next day after I wrote last to your grace, I received the honour of your letter of Oct. 2. I am much concerned that lord Albemarle finds so much difficulty at the Hague. I signified in my last, the queen's readiness to come into her share; and the lords have met again upon it, and after,

had a conference with my lord Strafford, who goes over fully instructed to press the States very warmly upon this head. On Sunday it will be considered what farther measures can be taken to prevail with the States. I believe my lord Strafford will be over as soon as this letter; for the yachts are ready to carry him over. As to what your grace is pleased to write, about the advance on the contracts for the winter magazines, I have directed Mr. Bridges to deliver in a demand for what is necessary for that service, on Tuesday next. Mr. Hill being again fallen ill, and Mr. Methuen's domestic affairs not permitting him to leave England, the queen, for dispatch, will be obliged to make use of one of her ministers, who is near there, to be arbitrator at Milan. I beseech your grace to accept the assurance, that I am, with the utmost respect," &c.

The Duke of Marlborough to Lord Oxford.

" My lord; *Camp near Bouchain, Oct.* 15.

" By my last to Mr. Secretary, your lordship will have seen the utmost of what we are to expect from the States, towards the execution of our project. The remarks I have made upon their last resolution may serve to set the matter in its true light; but I can scarce expect any other effect from it. Your lordship will see, by the disposition of the winter quarters, that we shall want near threescore squadrons of the number proposed for the frontiers; but I hope what we have, may, by the care and diligence of the commanders, be employed to very good use. M. Villars is doing part of our work for us, by continuing so long in his

camp, and consuming whatever could be expected from the neighbouring country, for the subsistence of his troops in the winter.

" Mr. Cardonel sends now to Mr. Lowndes a state of the pay of the general officers for this year, to be laid before your lordship, in which he has comprehended all such as have any relation to this army, whether they serve or not. For the former, I presume your lordship will not disapprove my giving the usual warrant; but for the others, I must pray your directions, what answers I may give upon their applications. My lord, this is a matter in which I apply to your friendship. You know my single word will scarce pass current, and I should be sorry any reproach should lie at my door, for not being able to gratify such persons as may have merit beyond the extent of the establishment. I have hitherto been so impartial in my distributions, that for three years past, that my brother has not served, I have left him out of the warrants, tho' he has been continued upon the establishment. I will only observe to your lordship, that my lord Orrery and brigadier Hamilton, who have been on this side during the campaign, will probably think their pretensions the best grounded.

" My lord Orrery has sent hither one Mr. Beaumont, who furnishes bread to the troops of the States, with proposals for furnishing the forage this winter. They are the fairest of any that have been yet made, and near a penny a ration cheaper than what the dutch pay; so that I have concluded to contract with him, and the articles of

agreement shall be sent to Mr. Lowndes as soon as they are settled and signed."

" *Oct.* 22. — In my last I acknowledged the honour of your lordship's letter of the 25th past, but had not time to express my sense of the gracious manner in which the queen is pleased to encourage the prosecution of the project, which, with the confidence her majesty thought fit to repose in me, for making bargains for the forage and stabling, I look upon as a particular mark of her satisfaction in my zeal for her service ; and I know, my lord, I have no small obligations to you for your good offices on this occasion.

" I have thought fit for the service to communicate your letter of the 28th to my lord Albemarle, who is now with me. He has writ largely to the Hague upon the subject of it. The justice he has done to her majesty's generosity, and the zeal of her ministers, and your lordship in particular, is a reproach to those in Holland ; but as the loss of time on their part has made it impracticable to provide what they proposed, I think they cannot reasonably expect her majesty should bear any part of the extraordinary charge, except that of the forage for the troops in her own pay. And as it has been, from the beginning of the war, my particular care to keep them from breaking in upon us in expenses of this nature, I shall be no less vigilant, now that I think they have no colour for making any demands from us, since they have not complied with the whole.

" I send now to Mr. Bridges a contract I have signed with Beaumont for forage. He will have

the honour to lay it before your lordship. This contract has been made with the best husbandry that could be, and you will please to observe, that we have the advantage of giving a month's warning for the forage for the spring. This was done with a particular view to the overtures from France, your lordship was pleased to communicate to me some time since; and I pray God we may not have occasion to put her majesty to that expense. I am, with much truth."

During this period, secretary St. John wrote in the same style of cordiality, approving the project, in his own behalf, as well as in the name of the queen, and reiterating the assurances, that the strongest representations had been made to the dutch, for the purpose of engaging their hearty concurrence. At the same time, both the ministers were mocking the duke of Marlborough with this affectation of hearty support, being well aware that the States, who were acquainted with the pending negotiations, would not agree to the siege of Quesnoy, or enter into any unnecessary expenditure, for a design, which they knew was not likely to be carried into execution.

In fact, notwithstanding the promise of the queen, that she would carry on the negotiation, in concurrence with the States, no official communications were made to the republic, for several months after the delivery of the preliminary articles proposed by the french court. The whole transaction was clandestinely managed, between Torcy and the british ministers, through the agency of Mesnager, who accompanied Prior on his return

to England. On the 27th of September, O. S., the preliminaries, founded on the basis of the seven articles, were signed by Mesnager, on the part of France, and by the two secretaries of state, in virtue of a warrant from the queen. In this dishonourable instrument, the only specific propositions were, the acknowledgment of the queen's title and the protestant succession, by the king of France, and his engagement to take all just and reasonable measures, that the crowns of France and Spain should never be united on the head of the same prince, from a persuasion that this excess of power would be contrary to the good and quiet of Europe. Thus, with a single stroke of the pen, was overturned the leading principle of the grand alliance, that no bourbon prince should ever fill the throne of Spain. A secure and convenient barrier was, indeed, promised to the States, the empire, and the house of Austria, but without the mention of any precise cession. Dunkirk was to be demolished, but a proper equivalent was to be settled on in the conferences; the pretensions of the allies were to be discussed *bonâ fidè* and amicably, and nothing omitted to terminate them to the satisfaction of all parties.

With an affectation of good faith and sincerity, a copy of these preliminaries was transmitted to count Gallas, the imperial minister; and, by him, a translation was inserted, without a moment's delay, in a newspaper called the Post Boy, by which means they were prematurely made public.

An official copy was likewise communicated to the States, and their concurrence peremptorily

demanded. These preliminaries were received in Holland with universal indignation. They disgusted even Buys himself, and his adherents, who had been so eager for peace, that to procure it they would have ceded Naples and Sicily to Philip, provided Spain and the Indies were withheld from a Bourbon prince, and a specific barrier assigned. The States accordingly dispatched Buys into England, to join with the ministers of the other allies, in remonstrating against such unwarrantable concessions. Meanwhile, Gallas had been ignominiously dismissed; and the ministers not only bitterly complained of the interference of the States, but positively warned them, that if they did not concur in the acceptance of these preliminaries, England would consider the smallest delay as a refusal, carry on the negotiations without them, and enter into no concert for the future prosecution of the war. *

While this affair was yet in agitation, the treasurer thus wrote to the general: —

" My lord; *Oct.* 19.–30.

" I received the honour on Wednesday last of three letters together from your grace, dated Oct. 15th, 19th, and 22d. I am not in a condition to answer the several particulars by this post; but I hope to be well enough to do it by the next. As to the general officers, your grace is the best judge of their services, and, I know, will be desirous to make the public money go as far as is possible. As

* Memoires de Torcy; — Mesnager's Negotiations; — St. John's Letters to the earl of Strafford, in Bolingbroke's Correspondence, together with the account of this clandestine negotiation in the publications of the times, and the english historians.

to the forage, of the seventy thousand pounds, which were remitted last week, twenty thousand are designed for that service, in case your grace thinks so much necessary to be advanced at present. If I mistake not, there was not above fifteen thousand advanced last year; but it is left to your grace to apportion that sum, and to regulate it as you shall see best for the service. As to the project for winter quarters, which had so general an approbation, and to the extraordinary expence of which, her majesty, upon your grace's recommendation, did so heartily concur, I am sorry those who are most concerned to support it, are so willing to let it drop. Ours is a very unlucky situation, that every one is shrinking from the war, and at the same time casting the burthen upon Britain, and yet unwilling to let her have the least advantage. I would to God that our allies would resolve either to make a good war or a good peace.*

" M. Buys came to town yesterday; I have not yet seen him, not being able to go abroad. I suppose he will go to Windsor on Sunday. Some of his countrymen have been so kind to him as to write to their correspondents here, that he is come to demand more troops, and to put an end to the beginning of a negotiation for peace. This will not render him very agreeable to the bulk of this nation; but I believe these are rumours spread by some who are no very good friends to M. Buys. Count Gallas has ordered some of those heads (for they are not preliminaries) to be printed, by some of our news scribblers, which, I believe, is

* There is a clause here omitted, which will appear in p. 122, &c.

the first instance of that kind, but not of the count's indiscretions, or passions, at the least. I cannot but think the States and all the allies may have these heads explained and extended to reasonable satisfaction; but if they cast away the opportunity, they themselves must bear the blame. I will end your grace's trouble at this time, with beseeching you to believe me to be, with the utmost respect and sincerity," &c.

In consequence of the demurs on the part of the dutch, it is not to be wondered that the duke of Marlborough should relinquish the siege of Quesnoy, and the farther prosecution of the project. But we cannot sufficiently abhor the machiavelian policy of the ministers, when secretary St. John could, with cool and malicious effrontery, observe to the queen: —

"*Sept. 25. O. S.* — I take the liberty, besides the extract of what our office letters bring, to trouble your majesty with a private letter from the duke of Marlborough, and the papers which came inclosed in it. If the project has been disappointed, it has not been so by your majesty, who gave orders for readily entering into the necessary measures on your part. However, it is of some use to have my lord Marlborough's confession, that we may be disabled from doing any thing the next year, and that the enemy may, perhaps, be in a condition to act offensively."

After continuing three weeks with the army, to put Bouchain in a posture of defence, and secure the navigation of the Scarpe to Douay, Marlborough made preparations to close the campaign,

by sending his troops into winter quarters. On the point of his departure, he appears to have been affected by the renewal of the accusations, with which he had been assailed, for prolonging the war; and no less mortified by the prospect of the humiliating part, which he was likely to perform at the Hague, deprived of the confidence of the government, and excluded from all official knowledge of political transactions. Under this impression, he appears to have written to the treasurer, in a tone of unusual querulousness and disappointment.

" I took it for a singular mark of your lordship's friendship, that you were pleased some time ago to communicate to me the overtures that were made from France towards a peace; and tho' I am no way curious to know what passes on that subject, yet I cannot conceal from you the concern I am under, lest you should have taken some impressions, from the writings and discourses of such as pretend, either out of friendship to me, or by my encouragement, to promote the continuance of the war. I protest to you, my lord, they do not utter my sentiments; there is nothing upon earth I wish more than an end of the war. Her majesty has not a subject who desires it more heartily than I do. I am perfectly convinced that, besides the draining our nation both of men and money, almost to the last extremity, our allies do, by degrees, so shift the burthen of the war upon us, that, at the rate they go on, the whole charge must at last fall on England. I assure you, I should never have had the confidence to propose

the least expence, were it not out of hopes, that such an extraordinary effort would have as good an effect, and induce the enemy to think seriously of peace, when they found the war so coming home to them; and 'tis possible the apprehensions of the execution of our project may have had some influence that way. But, my lord, as you have given me encouragement to enter into the strictest friendship with you, and I have done nothing to forfeit it, I beg your friendly advice in what manner I am to govern myself. You cannot but imagine 'twould be a terrible mortification to pass by the Hague, with our plenipotentiaries there, and myself a stranger to their transactions; and what hopes can I have of any countenance at home, if I am not thought fit to be trusted abroad. I could have been contented to have passed the winter on the frontier, if the States had done their part; but, under my present circumstances, I am really at a loss what part to take. My lord, I have put myself wholly into your hands, and shall be entirely guided by your advice, if you will be so kind as to favour me with it. We shall scarce be able to move from hence before the end of the month; for, besides the continuance of M. Villars in the neighbourhood, we shall be obliged to stay here till our frontier towns are sufficiently provided with forage. My writing in this manner is a freedom I should not take with your lordship, if I were capable of making an ill use, or a bad return for your friendship; and I demand of you, as a piece of justice, that you will believe me, with the greatest truth," &c.

Marlborough quitted Bouchain on the 25th, and repaired to Marchiennes. We find a letter dated from this place, which evinces a strong anxiety to cultivate the good will of the treasurer, with whom, as a servant of the queen, he was under the necessity of acting.

" *Marchiennes, Oct.* 26. — This is the last I shall trouble your lordship with from these parts. 'Tis chiefly to acquaint you that I now send to Mr. Secretary a resolution of the States, which their deputies communicated to me the 23d in the evening, with the answer I returned them. By the former it is insinuated the States expect the queen should come into a part of the extraordinary charge, occasioned by quartering on the frontiers the number of troops specified in the last distribution. This I think so unreasonable, that I do not give them the least encouragement to hope for any manner of compliance, beyond the forage for her majesty's own troops, and I shall continue to use the same language to them, unless you shall instruct me otherwise; for I understand the directions in your lordship's letter of the 28th past, relate only to what her majesty was inclined to do, if the States had wholly complied with the first project. What they now propose is altogether impracticable: it would keep us a month longer in the field, to make all their enquiries, and, besides that, several of our troops are already gone to their quarters. We have not forage for two days more, so that the marshal de Villars being marched on Friday last, I design this army shall do the same to-morrow, in order to separate; and I shall

be the same night at Tournay, where I intend to stay the rest of the week, to give such directions as may be necessary during the winter. The number of troops on this frontier does not require any other generals than the governors of the towns; and my lord Albemarle being the eldest of them, I have ordered the rest to meet me with him at Tournay, to settle every thing; so that, if it be possible, what is left here may not be altogether useless, but contribute, in some measure, to the great end I have so much at heart, and facilitate the advances France makes towards peace. It will take me up another week to get to the Hague, where I propose to make but a very short stay, if I find the yachts ready to carry me over; and I entreat your lordship will please to direct Mr. Lowndes to send orders to the Custom-house, that my baggage, and some small remains of my camp provisions, may pass directly to Whitehall, and be visited there, as has been practised in former years. I flatter myself your lordship will believe me, when I promise you I will make no ill use of this indulgence. In fine, my lord, I desire this may serve to prepare you to receive me, such as you would desire to find me, full of gratitude for the several marks of your friendship this campaign, and of resolution to do all that lies in my power to cultivate it; and to convince not only yourself, but all the world, that nothing can be more sincere than the profession I make of being ever, with truth, my lord," &c.

The unfortunate revolution in the british ministry, and the consequent change of measures,

produced a disastrous effect in every part of the theatre of war.

In Spain the consequences were peculiarly fatal. Philip, apprised of the favourable result likely to arise from the pending negotiations between France and England, justly deemed himself secure of retaining the spanish crown. He sent full powers to Louis, to make any reasonable concession which might accelerate a peace, and acquiesced in the defensive system, to which the french monarch prudently confined his military operations on the side of Catalonia.

Charles becoming, by the death of his brother, head of the house of Austria, and candidate for the throne of the empire, was anxious to exchange a scanty and precarious sovereignty, for an extensive and hereditary dominion, and to enjoy, without delay, the expected honours of the imperial dignity. He continued, therefore, at Barcelona, only to quiet the alarms of his faithful catalans, and to superintend the military operations. After consigning to marshal Staremberg the supreme command of the army, which had been reinforced by 7000 men, he took his departure in the month of September. In an affectionate letter to his spanish subjects, he stated the causes of his absence, praised their loyalty, announced his speedy return, and confided the government to his consort, whom he recommended as the most precious pledge which he could entrust to their fidelity.

On the 27th of September, Charles embarked on board the english fleet, and landed at Vado on the 8th of October. The genoese government

having declined to receive him as king of Spain, he scornfully rejected the offer of a convoy, and proceeded on his journey to his italian dominions, without halting in the territories of the republic. At Pavia, he had an interview with the duke of Savoy, and entered Milan with all the pomp of sovereignty. In this city he was hailed with the joyful intelligence of his election to the imperial throne, which took place at Frankfort on the 8th of October. After receiving the homage of his new subjects, and congratulations from the ministers of Venice, Tuscany, and Parma, in his joint capacity of emperor and king of Spain, he was gratified with the tardy, though respectful acknowledgments of the republic of Genoa. Departing from Italy, the emperor elect was crowned at Frankfort, with unusual pomp, on the 22d of December. In addition to his other titles, he assumed that of king of Spain, and in that quality created several knights of the Golden Fleece. Repairing to Vienna, he took quiet possession of all his hereditary dominions, confirmed the pacification of Hungary, directed the most vigorous preparations for continuing the war against the house of Bourbon, and exerted his strenuous efforts to traverse the pending negotiations.

It seemed as if the war in Spain had been suffered to languish by the mutual consent of the english and french cabinets. Although the commons had granted £1,500,000 for that service, and the ministers had expressed great solicitude to remedy the negligence of their predecessors, by prosecuting hostilities in the peninsula with in-

creasing vigour, they yet contrived to restrain the military movements within the limits adapted to their pacific views.

The duke of Argyle, indeed, reached Barcelona on the 29th of May, in the quality of embassador and commander of the british forces; but he came without remittances, and unprovided with funds, except £10,000 which he raised at Genoa on his own personal credit. This scandalous neglect, and the trifling reinforcements which he received, palsied the military operations; and the whole campaign passed in desultory skirmishes, without any affair of importance, except the investment of Cardona, by the duke of Vendome, and its relief by marshal Staremberg, after defeating the enemy, and capturing their artillery, ammunition, and baggage. At the close of the campaign, both armies resumed nearly the same positions as they had occupied in the commencement. *

The reader has already anticipated the inactive position of the armies in the empire; for as the election of Charles had the private concurrence of the french and british cabinets, the hostile troops on the Rhine remained on the defensive, and several detachments were even forwarded, to reinforce the army of the duke of Berwick in Dauphiné. The chief object of prince Eugene was, to maintain the tranquillity of Germany, to watch the motions of the enemy, and cover the diet of election. As soon, therefore, as the inauguration of Charles had

* House of Austria, chap. 80. — Memoirs of the Kings of Spain, chap. 19. — Memoires de St. Philippe, vol. iii. p. 7.

taken place, he distributed his army into winter quarters, and the french followed his example.

On the side of the Alps, the military operations were as little decisive as in other quarters. Although the duke of Savoy was induced to resume the command of the combined army, his presence was attended with no effectual advantage. After forcing his way into Savoy, and penetrating towards the frontiers of Provence, his progress was arrested by the able dispositions of the duke of Berwick, who posted his army so advantageously in the vicinity of Barreaux, as to repel the allies on whatever point they advanced. As the autumnal season approached, Victor Amadeus retraced his steps; and the only beneficial result of his movements was, as before, to weaken, by draughts, the army on the Rhine, and prevent the march of reinforcements into Catalonia.

In Portugal, no military operations of consequence occurred. The combined forces, under the earl of Portmore, re-captured Miranda de Douro, but were prevented from undertaking the siege of Badajoz, by an incursion of the bourbon troops, under the marquis de Bay; and both armies, as if by mutual consent, retired early into winter quarters.

CHAPTER 105.

1711.

Marlborough complains to the ministers of the lampoons and libels with which he was assailed.—Is deeply affected by the charges of fraud and peculation implied in the deposition of Sir Solomon Medina, one of the army contractors.—Vindication of his conduct to the commissioners of public accounts.—Returns to England.—Opposes the ministry.—Idle rumours of pretended conspiracies.—Remonstrates with the queen against the peace.—Expedients adopted by the opposition to annoy the ministry.—Refutation of the charges advanced against the late administration.—Union of Marlborough with the whigs and Nottingham.—Remonstrances of foreign powers against the negotiation.

The successes of Marlborough were now decried by his party opponents with more asperity than usual. The passage of the french lines was contemptuously called the crossing of the kennel; and whatever honour might attach to the enterprise was ascribed to the count of Hompesch, by whom the vanguard was led. The investment of Bouchain was stigmatised as futile, and he was censured for having sacrificed 16,000 men in the capture of a dove-cote. From these specimens of political obloquy, we may estimate the calumnies lavished on the british commander, and spare the reader a detail which disgraces the pages of our annals.

Unfortunately, these libellous attacks were not

unprovoked; for, without his participation or privity, the duchess, by means of Maynwaring and other agents, had deluged the press with the grossest libels against the queen and * ministry, and thus furnished too much excuse for retaliation on the duke himself. On the 19th of October, however, he wrote two affecting letters to the treasurer and the secretary, bitterly lamenting the cruelty of such unmerited scurrilities, and requesting their suppression. The letter to St. John is not extant; but we learn by a note from him to the queen, how little impression was made by the appeal of Marlborough.

" I have several letters from lord Marlborough. One of the 15th mentions the ill state of his health, and desires that your majesty will please to order a convoy and the yachts for him. Another of the 19th is very extraordinary. I had taken notice in a letter, which I knew would be shewn him again, of the impertinence of his chaplain, who published libels against your majesty's government. He denies that the person suspected had wrote the book complained of, and then finds fault with the answer to it, forgetting that the sermon preached before himself, and since printed, was still worse, and more seditious than the other paper." †

* In several of Mr. Maynwaring's letters we find numerous allusions to various satirical ballads and lampoons, which he and her other agents were daily fabricating. Among these was a severe caricature of Harley, under the name of Polypragmon, which was introduced in No. 190. of the Tatler, and must have highly provoked his resentment.

† Bolingbroke's Correspondence, vol. i. p. 415. He here alludes to a sermon preached by Dr. Hare, before the duke, in the camp, on the 11th of September, which contains no other libellous matter, than a severe reprehension of a precipitate and dishonourable peace.

The letter to the treasurer conveys a proof of that excessive sensibility, which we are concerned to observe in so great a mind.

" My lord; *Oct.* 19.

" I have had so many marks of your lordship's friendship, and have so sincerely endeavoured to deserve a continuance of it, that I apply myself to you in the tenderest part of it, and lay open my private griefs to you, with the same freedom you allow me in what regards the public. There are two papers lately published, on your side, and some copies are already got here; the title of one is " Bouchain," and the other an answer to it. I do not know whether your lordship looks into such papers, and I heartily wish they had been kept from me. I am sure you cannot hear of one without the other; and when I protest to you I am no way concerned in the former, I doubt not but you will have some feeling of what I suffer from the latter. As I have had all the reason in the world to be satisfied with every thing your lordship has done, in regard to myself, ever since I left you, and particularly your punctual remittances for the troops, I have taken all occasions to make my satisfaction as publicly known, as all the officers of the army can bear me witness; and it is so much the more mortifying to find myself and family treated in such a manner, when I had so much reason to hope the spirit from whence it proceeds was quite suppressed. I find it is insinuated that the provocation came from that side, and from the pen of one that has been long near

me*; but, upon examination, he has so fully cleared himself, that I am perfectly satisfied of his innocence, and nobody can wish more than I do that such writings could be suppressed; but if they can't be, it is very hard that when any body will use my name, I should be reviled in such a manner. The authors of these papers, as well the one as the other, are not only my enemies, they are yours too, my lord; they are enemies to the queen, and poison to her subjects; and it would be worth the while to make a strict search after them, that the punishment they deserve may be inflicted upon them. But all the remedy, all the ease I can at present expect, under this mortification is, that you, my lord, would do me the justice to believe me in no way an abettor or encourager of what has given me a mortal wound; but I will endeavour to bear up under it. I have that consolation from you; and as every thing else I could desire from you has been hitherto granted, before I could ask it, I flatter myself you will not deny me this satisfaction, no more than that of believing me, ever, with the greatest truth," &c. †

Reply of Lord Oxford. ‡

" My lord; *Oct.* 19.–30.

" As to the contents of your grace's letter of the 19th, I hope my sentiments are so fully known of that villainous way of libelling, I need say little to your grace upon that subject. When I had the honour to be secretary of state, I did, by an impar-

* Alluding to his chaplain, Dr. Hare.

† Hardwicke Papers. Printed in Somerville's Queen Anne.

‡ The rest of this letter is printed in the preceding chapter, page 108.

tial prosecution, silence most of them, until a party of men, for their own ends, supported them against the laws and my prosecution. I do assure your grace I abhor the practice, as mean and disingenuous. I have made it so familiar to myself, by some years' experience, that as I know I am every week, if not every day, in some libel or other, so I would willingly compound that all the ill-natured scribblers should have licence to write ten times more against me, upon condition they would write against nobody else. I do assure your grace I neither know nor desire to know any of the authors; and, as I heartily wish this barbarous war was at an end, I shall be very ready to take my part in suppressing them."

If the sensitive mind of Marlborough was thus affected by the ministerial lampoons of the day, which principally assailed his political life and military talents, it is not difficult to imagine how deeply his feelings were wounded, when, on his arrival at the Hague, his moral conduct was arraigned, and he was accused of fraud, extortion, and embezzlement of the public money.

The commissioners appointed to enquire into the abuses of the expenditure, examined, among others, Sir Solomon Medina, contractor for the supply of bread and bread-waggons for the forces in the Netherlands, in the pay of the queen. He deposed, that he had privately paid into the hands of the duke of Marlborough, for his own use, an annual sum, from 1707 to 1710, inclusive, which, added to the claim for the current year, amounted in the aggregate to £63,319. This deposition

being mysteriously whispered, and industriously circulated, as a state secret, soon became generally known, both at home and abroad; and, on such slender evidence, he was held up to the indignation of the world, as a public defaulter.

Without a moment's delay the insulted general drew up a brief, but masterly vindication of his conduct, and transmitted it to the commissioners, through the channel of Mr. Craggs.

"Gentlemen; — Having been informed on my arrival here, that Sir Solomon de Medina has acquainted you with my having received several sums of money from him, that it might make the less impression on you, I would lose no time in letting you know, that this is no more than what has been allowed as a perquisite to the general, or commander-in-chief of the army in the Low Countries, even before the Revolution, and since; and I do assure you, at the same time, that whatever sums I have received on that account have been constantly employed for the service of the public, in keeping secret correspondence, and getting intelligence of the enemy's motions and designs."

He then candidly mentioned another species of payment, to which they had not even adverted, and which did not, properly, relate to the public accounts, being a free gift from the foreign contingents. He stated that in the former war in the Netherlands, parliament had voted £10,000 a-year to the king for secret service, without account. This being found insufficient, the king, instead of applying to parliament, had obtained from the

sovereigns of the foreign auxiliaries, a deduction of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on their pay, instead of all other stoppages appropriated to the same purpose. Marlborough observed that he had negotiated this agreement, in the capacity of plenipotentiary, and that when he had succeeded to the command, the queen had continued the same privilege to him, to receive and employ this sum, without account, by her royal warrant, dated the 6th of July, 1702. This sum, he adds, has been applied from time to time for intelligence and secret service, and with such success, that, next to the blessing of God, and the bravery of the troops, we may, in a great measure, attribute most of the advantages of the war in this country, to the timely and good advices procured with the help of this money.

" And now, gentlemen," he continued, " as I have laid the whole matter fairly before you, and I hope you will allow I have served my queen and country, with that faithfulness and zeal which becomes an honest man, the favour that I intreat of you is, that when you make your report to the parliament, you will lay this part before them in its true light, so that they may see this necessary and important part of the war has been provided for, and carried on, without any other expence to the public, than ten thousand pounds a-year. And I flatter myself that when the accounts of the army in Flanders come under your consideration, you will be sensible the service on this side has been carried on with all the economy and good husbandry to the public that was possible." *

* This letter was printed in the Report to the House of Commons, and is to be found in all our historical publications.

To this address was annexed a copy of the royal warrant, signed by the queen, and countersigned by Sir Charles Hedges, as secretary of state.

At the same time he sent a copy of this justification, accompanied with a manly letter, to the treasurer.

" My lord; *Hague, Nov.* 10.

" The friendly part your lordship took in the grievance I lately laid before you, gives me encouragement to have recourse once more to your friendship, in a matter, differing from the former in its circumstances, but such as, nevertheless, gives me a very sensible concern. Upon my arrival here, I had notice that my name was brought before the commissioners of accounts, possibly without any design to do me a prejudice. However, to prevent any ill impression it might make, I have writ a letter to those gentlemen, setting the matter in its true light, which Mr. Craggs will deliver; and when you have taken the pains to read the inclosed copy, pray be so kind as to employ your good offices, so as that it may be known I have the advantage of your friendship. No one knows better than your lordship the great use and expence of intelligence, and no one can better explain it; and 'tis for that reason I take the liberty to add a farther request, that you would be so kind to lay the whole, on some fitting opportunity, before the queen, being very well persuaded her majesty, who has so far approved, and so well rewarded my services, would not be willing they should now be reflected on.

" My lord, you see I make no scruple to give

you a little trouble, which to a temper like yours, rather increases than diminishes the pleasure of doing a good office. I do, therefore, boldly claim the benefit of your friendship, and am so sanguine as to expect the good effects of it, which I shall make it my constant business to deserve. The endeavours of our enemies to destroy the friendship between us, will double mine to continue and improve it; and I have now the greater desire to be at home, that I may explain to you, what I cannot so well write, I mean the true sincerity wherewith I am," &c.

By the same post he forwarded another copy to his friend Godolphin, announcing his speedy return to England, and his vexation at the malignity of the libels with which he was assailed.

"*Nov.* 10. — I am to thank you for yours of the 25th from Newmarket, and I hope, with all my heart, you may be returned by the time I may get to London. I am resolved to take the very first opportunity, as soon as the convoy comes, which I expect every day, the wind being fair to bring them. I wish I had your good temper and judgment, for then I should not be vexed, as I now am, at the villainous libels which appear every day; but of this more when I have the happiness of being with you.

"Mr. Craggs will shew you a copy of a letter I have written to the commissioners of accounts. You shall know, and, I hope, will approve of my reasons when we meet, which, I hope, will be quickly."

Soon after this letter was written, Marlborough

gladly took his departure from the Hague, where, instead of his former distinction and consequence, he exhibited a spectacle of declining favour. Proceeding to the Brill, he embarked in company with baron Bothmar, the hanoverian envoy, and on the 17th of November landed at Greenwich, to encounter new disgusts and aggravated indignities.

That day being the anniversary of the inauguration of queen Elizabeth, when, according to annual custom, the effigies of the pope, the devil, and the pretender, were burnt by the mob, he prudently continued at Greenwich, that he might not appear to countenance any disturbance, which might arise from the tumultuous proceedings likely to occur at this critical juncture.

Early on the morning of the 18th, he passed through the city, and proceeded to Hampton Court, to pay his respects to the queen. To avoid any imputation of neglect, he was assiduous in his attention to the ministers. In this instance, he acted with his usual caution; for on his arrival in London, he found a general alarm pervading the metropolis, and the most injurious reflections cast on his friend Godolphin, and the whig leaders. These charges arose from the measures adopted by the government. Fearful of some tumult, from the religious zeal which this procession had generally awakened, and which might produce dangerous consequences, in the actual ferment of party, the ministry had sent the messengers, with a detachment of guards, who siezed the effigies prepared for the occasion, which were deposited in an empty house in Angel Court, Drury Lane, on the night

of the 16th, and carried them to the office of the secretary of state, lord Dartmouth. At the same time, either from real or from feigned apprehensions, the most serious precautions were taken to prevent a tumult, which was not unlikely to happen, from the disappointment of the populace in their usual diversion. The trained bands were called out, and kept three days under arms, and regular troops were posted, in different places, to prevent unlawful assemblies. The ministerial writers of the day did not fail to profit by this ridiculous affair, to impute to the whigs a regular design of producing a tumult, in order to render the peace unpopular. They published an exaggerated account of the intended processions, and, reflecting on the Kit Cat Club, a whig association, as instigators or authors of the design, gave the initials of several of the most respectable noblemen and gentlemen *, as furnishing subscrip-

* Bowyer's Queen Anne. These initials were intended to designate Godolphin, Somers, Sunderland, Wharton, Halifax, and other principal leaders of the party. Some modern writers have strangely misunderstood and misrepresented the time and nature of these pretended conspiracies. Misconceiving the confused and garbled stories given by Macpherson from Carte, they have mixed these and other reports together, to furnish a reason for the dismission of the duke of Marlborough.

One of our writers has gravely asserted, that the duke was to profit by the confusion at the anniversary of the gunpowder plot, to assemble a select body of troops, and seize the person of the queen. It is a pity he did not recollect, that on the 5th of November the duke of Marlborough was still in Holland; that on the 16th of November, when the ridiculous farce of seizing the effigies of the pope, the devil, and the pretender, which were to have been burnt on the morrow, he had not landed; that on the 17th, he purposely remained at Greenwich; and, above all, that his dismission, which was said to be the effect of these plots and conspiracies, did not take place till the 31st of December.

tions for this pageant, and as intending to aggravate the tumult, by spreading a report that the queen was either dying or dead. No disturbance took place, in consequence of the precautions of government, and the figures were destroyed, after remaining three days in durance at the secretary's office, a source of real, or pretended alarm to one party, and of ridicule to the other.

Marlborough was now placed in a critical situation. He had hitherto received the overtures of Oxford and St. John, with similar returns of courtesy and cordiality; first, with the view of screening himself from the accusations which the committee of inquiry had already prepared against him, and, secondly, to obtain from the queen the warrants for continuing the works at Blenheim, in which he was deeply interested, and which, he declared to Godolphin, should be the only favour he would ask from government. But the time was now arrived, when he could no longer dissemble with those who dissembled, nor trust to the insidious smiles of those who courted him from interest or fear. He had now no alternative but to join cordially with the government, to the sacrifice of his principles, or by adhering to the whigs, to encounter ministerial enmity, by a public opposition. Reduced

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Others make up a new version of the same idle and defamatory tale, for the eve of his dismission.

It is singular that Swift in his gossiping, though interesting letters to Stella, in relating all the rumours of the day, never adverts to this story of a conspiracy in this correspondence until February 9.—See Chapter 107, in which an account is given of other imaginary conspiracies, similar to this ridiculous fiction.

to this alternative, he did not hesitate to follow the dictates of conscience; and, though fully aware of the fate which awaited him, he disdained to give even his tacit approbation to the degrading sacrifice, which they had offered of the national honour. He therefore boldly remonstrated with the queen against the disgraceful conditions of the preliminaries, and absented himself from the cabinet councils, which were held on the pending negotiations. His conduct naturally excited the animadversions of the ministers; and St. John observes, "I hear that in his conversation with the queen, the duke of Marlborough has spoken against what we are doing; in short, his fate hangs heavy upon him, and he has of late pursued every counsel which was the worst for him." *

The adherence of Marlborough to the whigs, in which he was followed by Godolphin, and his decided opposition to the proposed conditions of peace, filled the party with sanguine hopes of success; and these hopes were increased, by a concurrence of circumstances, which seemed to forebode the disgrace of the tory ministry.

We have already noticed the malicious cavils levelled against the financial administration of Godolphin, in the report of the commons. The unfavourable impression which they made on the public mind began to abate; for the infamous misrepresentations and exaggerated abuses were so ably refuted, that they found credit only with the partisans of the ministers. Among those who

* Bolingbroke's Correspondence, vol. i. p. 480.

advocated the cause of the late administration, Walpole was the principal champion. In a masterly publication, entitled, "The Thirty-five Millions *accounted for*," * he concisely and ably exposed the fallacy of the charge, which imputed to the late administration so enormous a deficit. Some of the unsettled accounts comprehended in this statement, he proved to belong even to the reigns of Charles II. James II. and William; and those which concerned the late ministers, when separately examined, left a balance of only £7,557,513. Even from this balance were to be deducted many disbursements, for extraordinaries during the pressure of war, which could not admit of regular vouchers, and these reduced it to four millions, for a great part of which balance, accounts were brought in after the report. †

To the same pen we likewise owe a very able tract, entitled, "The History of the last Parliament," in which the author fully justified the proceedings of the late administration, and delineated in glowing colours the portrait of the great general, who was exposed to so much unmerited obloquy.

These and other writings served to counteract the abuses heaped upon the former administration, by their successors; and though they did not reinstate the whigs in the favour of the public, yet they essentially contributed to detract from the

* This pamphlet was certainly written by Sir Robert Walpole, though it has been attributed to Arthur Maynwaring. — Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, chap. 6.

† In Somerville's Queen Anne is a sensible note on this subject, p. 418.

popularity of their opponents, whose measures had no longer the grace of novelty.

The accession of lord Nottingham to their party was another source of strength.

In the last session of parliament, the new ministry had a very considerable majority in the house of commons, and sufficient weight in the upper house, to ensure the approval of their measures. The whigs, therefore, had no hopes of making a successful opposition, and acquiesced without much struggle in the decision of the majority. But in the session, which assembled soon after the arrival of the duke from the continent, the defection of the earl of Nottingham from the tories, of which party he had been hitherto invariably the champion, deprived the ministry of their former preponderance. Disgusted because he did not receive those honours and rewards, which he deemed his due, Nottingham made overtures for an union with the whigs, and a compromise was effected. Each party agreed, by sacrificing something of their principles, to gratify the other, in order to turn their united strength against the ministry. The whigs promised to support a bill of occasional conformity, which they had hitherto uniformly resisted; and the indefatigable adversary of offensive war, agreed to oppose the conclusion of peace, except on the principles of the whigs, that Spain and the Indies should be wrested from the house of Bourbon.

To give effect to these united efforts, the opposition resorted to every measure, which was calculated to prevent or retard a peace. They even

called in the aid of the States composing the grand alliance, to awaken the british court and people to a sense of their honour and interests.

In conformity with this plan, the dutch, through the agency of their minister, Buys, made strong and repeated remonstrances to the queen. The new emperor followed their example, by employing both public and private exhortation, to retain her in the bands of the grand alliance, and was even preparing to send prince Eugene into England, to give additional effect to his representations.

But the deepest impression was produced by the remonstrances of the elector of Hanover, whom the queen had vainly endeavoured to lure, by warm professions of regard, and even by offering him the command of the army in the Netherlands. Baron Bothmar, his minister, presented a memorial, which was drawn up with the approbation of Marlborough and the whigs. It enforced the necessity of preserving a good understanding among the allies, and of mutually guarantying their respective interests, and concluded with detailing the pernicious consequences, which would ensue, from suffering a prince of the house of Bourbon to retain Spain and the Indies.

Among other strong expressions, the hanoverian minister observed, "The sentiments of his electoral highness on the peace, and on the preparatory negotiation are, that the allies require not only positive declarations, but real securities, especially against an enemy whose methods of acting are

well known. This was provided for in the former preliminaries, by obliging France to yield previously certain cautionary towns. In the present articles, on the contrary, there is neither any real security, nor any clear and distinct declaration. All is couched in indefinite, general terms, which, in reality, express nothing, and, upon which, years might be consumed in negotiating. It is left to be considered which is the surest way, to put a speedy end to the war; whether by previously exacting such conditions from France, that nothing may remain to be done in a general congress, but to give them the form of a treaty, or to open that congress, on terms which are captious and obscure, and which leave full scope for France to practise her usual intrigues and chicanes."

Nor is the conclusion less emphatic and forcible. "There is ground to hope, that by remaining firmly united, the allies may soon oblige France (with the blessing of God) to agree to reasonable conditions, her extreme indigence, and need of peace, being very certain, and confirmed from all parts. The Almighty has blessed the arms of the queen and of her allies with so many triumphs over their powerful enemy, to the end they may secure themselves by a safe and advantageous peace, from all their apprehensions; and it cannot be his pleasure, that an enemy so exhausted and vanquished, as the king of France has been on all occasions, should at last accomplish his designs by this war, and conclude it by a peace, glorious to himself, ruinous to the victorious allies, and destructive to the

liberties of all Europe, in acquiring the power of giving a monarch to Spain, of imposing another upon Great Britain, and of making the validity of the election to the crown of the empire depend on his approbation." *

* History of Europe, 1711, p. 398.

CHAPTER 106.

1711—1712.

Ineffectual attempt of the ministry to gain Marlborough and the whig chiefs.— Opening of the parliament.—Debate on the address. — Speech of the duke of Marlborough. — Amendment carried against the ministers in the house of peers. —Adjournment. — Alarms of the ministry.—Apprehensions of the queen.—Advice of Oxford successful.— Charges of peculation brought forward against Marlborough.—Report of the commissioners published.—Dismission of the duke. — The ministers obtain a majority by the creation of twelve new peers.

As the meeting of parliament drew near, the queen and ministry were considerably alarmed at the strength of opposition, and the well-concerted efforts of the allies to obstruct the negotiations. After many ineffectual endeavours of the treasurer to gain several of the peers, the sovereign herself closeted some of the lords in opposition, and particularly the duke of Marlborough, lord Somers, and lord Cowper; but all her expostulations had no more effect than the conciliatory advances of her ministers. In this alarming crisis, it was proposed to extend the prorogation of parliament for a few days, in order to gain time for counteracting the effects of the threatened resistance; but this expedient being considered as indicative of degrading appre-

hensions, was abandoned, and parliament assembled on the 6th of the December, the appointed day of meeting.

The ministry contemplated with firmness the storms of the approaching session. Confident in the support of their sovereign, and the favour of the public, they openly proclaimed their sentiments.

In the speech from the throne, the queen observed, "I have called you together, as soon as the public affairs would permit, and I am glad to tell you, that notwithstanding *the arts of those who delight in war*, both place and time are appointed for opening the treaty of a general peace." After this indirect reflection on the general and the whigs, she did not hesitate to add, what was contrary to fact, "The allies, and especially the States General, have, by their ready concurrence, expressed their entire confidence in me." Having asked the customary supplies for carrying on the war with vigour, as the surest means of rendering the treaty effectual, she avowed that her chief concern was for securing the protestant religion, and the succession to the crown, as limited by parliament to the house of Hanover. She then expressed her assurance, that no true protestant or good subject would envy her the glory of ending a tedious and expensive war, by a just and honourable peace. She anticipated the opposition, which was expected from the whigs, by recommending unanimity, adding, "that our enemies may not think us a people divided amongst ourselves, and, consequently, prevent our obtaining

that good peace, of which we have such reasonable hopes, and so near a view."

On descending from the throne, and divesting herself of her royal robes, the queen returned *incognita* into the house, with the expectation that her presence would restrain the heats of debate; but the expedient proved ineffectual.

The earl of Ferrars having made the usual motion for an address, Nottingham suddenly rose, and opened the attack against the ministry. He censured the preliminaries as insufficient and captious, urged the express engagements, which Great Britain had contracted by the grand alliance, and concluded with moving a clause, declaring, that no peace could be safe or honourable, if Spain and the West Indies were to be allotted to any branch of the house of Bourbon.

So direct a censure of their recent conduct, and so complete an obstacle to the pending negotiations, roused the ministerial party; but they were overwhelmed by the united force of the whigs and discontented tories. In the course of the debate, lord Anglesea did not refrain from uttering a covert censure on the conduct of the duke of Marlborough, by observing that the country might have enjoyed the blessing of peace, soon after the battle of Ramilies, if it had not been deferred by some persons whose interest it was to prolong the war.

This acrimonious reflection drew forth a manly reply from the general. Rising with dignity and warmth, and bowing to the place where the queen was sitting, he made that public and manly appeal,

which, at the present moment, when the petty passions of the time have ceased to operate, cannot be read without mingled sensations of shame, sympathy, and indignation.

" I appeal to the queen," he said, " whether I did not constantly, while I was plenipotentiary, give her majesty and her council an account of all the propositions that were made, and whether I did not desire instructions for my conduct on this subject. I can declare, with a good conscience, in the presence of her majesty, of this illustrious assembly, and of God himself, who is infinitely superior to all the powers of the earth, and before whom, by the ordinary course of nature, I shall soon appear, to render an account of my actions, that I was very desirous of a safe, honourable, and lasting peace, and was always very far from prolonging the war for my own private advantage; as several libels and discourses have most falsely insinuated. My great age, and my numerous fatigues in war, make me ardently wish for the power to enjoy a quiet repose, in order to think of eternity. As to other matters, I had not the least inducement, on any account, to desire the continuance of the war for my own particular interest; since my services have been so generously rewarded by her majesty and her parliament; but I think myself obliged to make such an acknowledgment to her majesty and my country, that I am always ready to serve them, whenever my duty may require, to obtain an honourable and a lasting peace. Yet I can by no means acquiesce in the measures that have been taken, to enter into a negotiation of peace with

France, upon the foot of some pretended preliminaries, which are now circulated; since my opinion is the same as that of most of the allies, that to leave Spain and the West Indies to the house of Bourbon, will be the entire ruin of Europe, which I have, with all fidelity and humility, declared to her majesty, when I had the honour to wait on her after my arrival from Holland. I therefore support the motion for inserting the proposed clause in the address."

The pathos and solemnity with which he delivered this manly appeal, produced a great sensation in the house; and it was warmly seconded by Cowper, Halifax, and bishop Burnet, and only feebly opposed by the subordinate members of government. A motion for the previous question was lost by the single casting vote of Nottingham, and the clause itself carried by a majority of 64 to 52.

The address, thus altered, being presented, the queen drily answered, "I take your thanks kindly, but should be sorry that any one should think I would not do my utmost to recover Spain and the West Indies from the house of Bourbon."

To obviate the effect of this pointed and public censure, the ministerial party exerted themselves in the house of commons, where they possessed an overwhelming majority. A similar clause was rejected with disdain, by a majority of 232 voices against 106, and a loyal address voted, expressing their satisfaction at the declaration made by her majesty, relative to the negotiations for peace, and the highest confidence in her wisdom. A phrase

was inserted in this address, conveying an oblique censure on the duke of Marlborough, in words almost similar to those used by the earl of Anglesea in the upper house; namely, that "they would exert their utmost endeavours to disappoint, *as well the arts and designs of those who, for private views, might delight in war*, as the hopes the enemies might have vainly entertained of receiving any advantage from any division among them." *

Notwithstanding this repulse in the commons, the party in opposition, confident of their strength in the upper house, continued their hostilities against the ministers with redoubled energy.

Conscious that they could not at once stem this torrent of opposition in the house of lords, the ministers hoped to obtain time and means for disuniting this formidable phalanx. With this view, they proposed to move for an adjournment till the 14th of January; but their intentions could not be concealed from their opponents, who had sufficient influence to limit it to the second.

This victory was accompanied by another proof of ascendancy. On the day preceding the recess, Nottingham, with an evident intention of refuting the assertion in the speech, that all the allies placed entire confidence in the queen, moved an address. It prayed "that her majesty would be pleased to give instructions to her plenipotentiaries, to consult with the ministers of the allies in Holland, before the opening of the congress, that they might concert the necessary measures, to preserve a strict

* Journals — Chandler — Tindal — Lediard.

union amongst them all, the better to obtain the great end proposed by her majesty, for procuring to them all just and reasonable satisfaction, and for rendering the peace more secure and lasting, which could only be effected, by a general guaranty of the terms of the peace to all the allies, and of the protestant succession to these kingdoms, as settled by act of parliament."

The treasurer did not venture directly to oppose the principle of this motion, which he characterised as needless, because such orders had been already issued; and, if any doubt existed of the fact, the lords themselves, he said, might appoint a committee to examine the instructions of the plenipotentiaries. The house was satisfied with this answer, and the address was agreed to, with the introduction of a clause, "in case her majesty had not already given such orders." On the 21st the house adjourned to the 2d of January, and, on the 27th, the address was presented, to the surprise and mortification of the queen.

From the return of Marlborough to the meeting of the peers, after the recess, an awful suspense had prevailed, and the minds of the two great parties were agitated with the conflicting passions of fear and hope.

Preparatory to the intended attack on the ministry, a bill of occasional conformity, which was the cement of their union, was brought into the house on the motion of Nottingham, with some modifications to satisfy his whig allies. This bill naturally received the concurrence, even of the tories who were identified with government, and;

consequently, encountered little opposition; though it was mortifying to the minister, who had always manifested a strong attachment to the dissenters, and was warmly urged by that body to oppose its enactment.

The hopes of the opposition were strengthened by the dubious conduct and timid character of the queen. Her aversion to the whigs, her dislike of the duchess of Marlborough, and the opposition she had encountered in the disposal of civil and military offices, together with the revived attachment to her family, had induced her to dismiss the late ministers, and to appoint an administration, nominally composed of tories. But the difficulties which occurred in the negotiations abroad, the shame of deserting the principles of the grand alliance, and the checks she experienced, even from the ministers of her choice, in the nomination to the offices of her own household, excited frequent fits of discontent. This feeling was particularly called forth, by the importunities of the ministry for the removal of the duke and duchess of Somerset, who had provoked their enmity; for the duke had recently acted the same part as on the trial of Sacheverell, by exerting all his influence against the ministry, and particularly in the recent discussion relative to the peace, had even employed the queen's name, to obtain votes in support of the clause introduced by Nottingham. The ministers justly considered this defection as a mark of decided hostility; and not only solicited the queen for his removal, but even pressed for that of his duchess, who was zealously devoted to the

whigs, and had recently imparted to her majesty some papers and memorials which her servants had ventured to suppress. But the indiscreet zeal with which they urged their request offended a princess, who was jealous of her authority, and who had been told by themselves, that she had submitted to a degradation of her crown, in yielding to the representations of her former servants. Indignant at restraint from those whom she considered as her liberators, she did not conceal her displeasure, and was heard to declare, that if she was to be kept in bondage, she might as well have retained her former guardians as the present. She also evinced this pertinacity at a moment when it appeared decisive, as indicating a change of her sentiments. At the close of the debate on the 15th of December, in the house of lords, in which the duke of Somerset so essentially contributed to mortify the ministry, as she was preparing to retire, the duke of Shrewsbury asked her, whom she would chuse to lead her out, whether himself, as lord chamberlain, or lord Lindsay, who was hereditary great chamberlain. She peevishly and emphatically replied, "neither," and gave her hand to the duke of Somerset. Such a mark of distinction, which could not escape public and general notice, caught the vigilant attention of those who anxiously watched the appearances of the moment, and gave rise to innumerable conjectures, all to the disadvantage of the ministry. Some supposed that she began to feel reviving regard for the duke of Marlborough; some, that his representations, backed by those of the emperor, the elector, and

the dutch, had made an impression; some, that she felt her present administration too weak to support their system, and was holding out a lure to the opposition. All these circumstances were not lost on the timid, self-interested, and wavering, and did not fail to raise the hopes of Marlborough and his friends, as much as they depressed those of the new ministry. *

The whigs were highly elated with their success, and anticipated their immediate restoration to power. It was even apprehended by the tories, that a new ministry was in contemplation, of which lord Somers was to be the head, as lord treasurer, and in which Walpole, who is designated by Swift as one of the ablest of the whig speakers, was to be secretary of state. Lord Dartmouth was in despair; Mrs. Masham did not conceal her apprehensions, but allowed that the sentiments of the queen were changed; secretary St. John declared that her majesty was false †; and even the treasurer himself, though he affected to appear cheerful, yet displayed such occasional symptoms of alarm and despondency, as induced Swift to say to him, in his usual style of sarcastic irony; "If there is no remedy, your lordship will lose your head, but I shall only be hung, and so carry my body entire to the grave." ‡

* See Swift's Journal to Stella, from 1st December 1711, to 26th of January 1711–12, passim; — Four last Years of Queen Anne; — Bolingbroke's Correspondence; — Tindal, &c.

† On the 9th, St. John used this expression to Swift, but, on the 12th, we find him re-assured, and writing to lord Strafford that all was secure.

‡ Swift's Journal to Stella, Dec. 8.

Such being the feelings of the favourite and the ministers, their timid or lukewarm adherents were naturally alarmed, and displayed symptoms of defection. The duke of Somerset, as we have already observed, had seceded from his new friends, and was exerting his great influence in decrying their measures. The duke of Buckingham appeared lukewarm, and scarcely shewed an inclination to defend that ministry with which he was identified. Finally, the duke of Shrewsbury gave way to his characteristic timidity, declined accepting the responsible post of plenipotentiary at the congress, and began to make advances for the renewal of his friendship with the duke of * Marlborough. The whole tory party, disconcerted by this division of their chiefs, and the successful progress of the whigs, were agitated with doubt and despondency. Even the queen herself seemed to feel the multiplied embarrassments into which she had been plunged by personal pique and party attachment.

Nothing but a decisive and vigorous exertion of power could have saved the ministry; and the treasurer, sensible of the critical situation in which he was placed, did not hesitate to recur to the only expedient capable of ensuring his safety. He wrought on the jealousy and irritated feelings of the sovereign, and convinced her that nothing but a zealous support of her actual servants could rescue her from the bondage of the whigs, now doubly offended by their disgrace, or from the humiliation of re-admitting to her presence an imperious

* From a narrative of the duchess.

favourite, whom she had loaded with scorn, and dismissed with contempt: he even desisted from requiring the removal of the duchess of Somerset, and permitted the duke to remain some time longer in office. *

The ministers were convinced that the accession of Marlborough to the coalition of the whigs and Nottingham, had principally occasioned their defeat in the house of peers, and endangered their safety. As he had thus thrown away the scabbard, he could not expect them to moderate their political hostility. Indeed, from the favourable state of their intercourse with France, they no longer contemplated the necessity of his services in another campaign, and, at least, regarded with indifference, if they did not anticipate with satisfaction, the prospect of a schism in the grand alliance, which must be the consequence of his resignation. They, therefore, resolved to give full scope to their vengeance, and, at the same time, to wound, through him, the coalition of which he was the principal bulwark. This attack was carried into execution, by suffering the commissioners of accounts to bring forward their charges of fraud and peculation, which had been first made known, by circulating the deposition of Sir Solomon Medina.

No accusation is more popular, or obtains a more ready credence, than a charge founded on the mismanagement of public money. An accusation of this kind had already been levelled against Godolphin, relating to the thirty-five millions unaccounted for, and had produced a temporary effect

* Swift's Journal to Stella, from Dec. 1. to Dec. 30.

on the minds of the nation; though it was not only afterwards disproved, but the deficit of his administration reduced, by the acknowledgment of the commons themselves, to £20,000. * A similar attack was now made against Marlborough. His reply from the Hague was not deemed satisfactory by the commissioners, who continued to prosecute their inquiry, and, with the connivance of the ministry, to bring forward their charges in a more public and definite shape.

On the 15th of December an order passed the commons, for the commissioners of public accounts to report their proceedings. Accordingly, on the 21st, Mr. Lockhart, in their behalf, presented their report, which was brought up, and taken into consideration, on the 17th of January, and another order was passed, requiring the production of the documents on which their statement was founded. On the ensuing day, Shippen †, another of the commissioners, presented the deposition of Sir Solomon Medina, the contractor for bread to the allied army, accompanied by other papers of the same kind. To give the charges more effect, by clothing them with an air of mystery, the depositions were ordered to be kept private, and copies to be delivered by the clerk to the members only.

* This sum was employed in secret service, for the promotion of the union. Proper vouchers were, however, produced for £8000, and the distribution of the remainder, which could not be safely divulged, was justified by a warrant from the queen. Cunningham, vol. ii. p. 352. and Somerville's Queen Anne, p. 463, chap. 10. where we find an able and candid vindication of the integrity of the minister, as well as of the policy by which he was guided in the disposal of this money.

† The reader will recollect that Shippen and Lockhart were known to be jacobites.

Immediately afterwards an adjournment of the commons took place to the 14th of January.

The leading feature in this memorable report was, the deposition of Sir Solomon Medina, which consisted of several heads. He stated, that from 1707 to 1711, he had paid to the duke of Marlborough, *for his own use*, on the different contracts for the army, the sum of 332,425 guilders. That he was obliged to supply yearly twelve or fourteen waggons gratis, for the use of the duke himself. That on each contract he had presented Cardonel, secretary to the duke, with a gratuity of 500 ducats. Lastly, that he had paid Mr. Sweet, deputy paymaster at Amsterdam, the farther allowance of 1 per cent. on all the monies he received.

He likewise deposed that Antonio Alvarez Machado, the preceding contractor, had advanced the like sums, in the same manner, from 1702 to 1706.

From these data the commissioners computed that the duke of Marlborough had received and appropriated, in the space of ten years, the sum of 664,851 guilders and 4 stivers, making in sterling money, £63,319 : 3s : 7d.

They then introduced the letter which the duke had addressed to them from the Hague, and concluded their report with some remarks and deductions which were flagrantly unjust, false, and erroneous.

They denied that the sums, of which he had there acknowledged the receipt, were either legal or warrantable perquisites. They asserted that they could not find proofs that any english general,

either in the Low Countries, or elsewhere, had ever received such perquisites; but, even in that case, the precedent did not furnish a justification, because the public must necessarily suffer for every such deduction. They even proceeded to argue, that the caution with which it was taken, was of itself an indication that it was not justifiable, and declared that Mr. Cardonel, the duke's secretary, and auditor of the bread account, had testified on oath, that he had never heard of this perquisite, till the deposition of Medina was made public. They did not even refrain from the malicious insinuation, that this was not the only illegal perquisite which the general had appropriated.

Adverting then particularly to the gratuity of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. from the foreign auxiliaries, they observed, that the warrant for this allowance had been concealed without due reason. That it could not be a free gift, because the general himself had stipulated for it, by order of the late king, in the subsidiary treaties with the foreign powers. For these and other causes, too long to detail, they denounced the duke of Marlborough as having illegally appropriated to his own use the sum of £282,366, computing the deduction of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the £11,294,659 paid to all the foreign troops in the british service, or £177,695, computing the same per centage on the £7,107,873 paid to the foreign auxiliaries, exclusive of those employed in Spain, Portugal, and Italy.* This sum they de-

* Some of the enemies of the duke even joined these two sums together, to make a total of £460,366, and the error is repeated by Torcy, vol. iii. p. 254.

clared to be public money, for which, as receiver, he was accountable. *

To repel the accusations contained in this report, the letter written by the duke, from the Hague, was published in the daily Courant of the 27th of December; and as that reply seemed to make considerable impression, the report itself was printed on the 29th, in the same paper, by order of the ministers.

The publication of this document was the immediate prelude to his dismission. On the same or the following day he appeared at court, but was treated with marked symptoms of coldness and contempt. † Without waiting for farther investigation of a charge, which was afterwards proved, in the most material parts, to be false, the ministry profited by the impression which they conceived the report had made on the public mind. By their representations, the queen was induced to appear at the cabinet council on the 31st of December, and order this entry to be made in the books: —

"Being informed that an information against the duke of Marlborough was laid before the house of commons, by the commissioners of the public accounts, her majesty thought fit to dismiss him from all his employments, that the matter might undergo an impartial investigation."

The ensuing day her majesty communicated this resolution to the duke of Marlborough, in a note

* Journals and Debates of the Commons; — Lockhart's Papers, vol. i. 351—362.

† "The duke of Marlborough appeared at court, and no one spoke to him." — Swift's Journal to Stella.

written in her own hand, which is not extant, because, in a transport of indignation, he threw it into the fire. * We, however, learn the substance, from his manly and feeling answer.

" Madam; I am very sensible of the honour your majesty does me, in dismissing me from your service, by a letter of your own hand, though I find by it that my enemies have been able to prevail with your majesty, to do it in the manner that is most injurious to me. And if their malice and inveteracy against me had not been more powerful with them than the consideration of your majesty's honour and justice, they would not have influenced you to impute the occasion of my dismission, to a false and malicious insinuation contrived by themselves, and made public, when there was no opportunity for me to give in my answer, which they must needs be conscious would fully detect the falsehood and malice of their aspersions, and not leave them that handle for bringing your majesty to such extremities against me.

" But I am much more concerned at an expression in your majesty's letter, which seems to complain of the treatment you had met with. I know not how to understand that word, nor what construction to make of it. I know I have always endeavoured to serve your majesty faithfully, and zealously, through a great many undeserved mortifications. But if your majesty does intend by that expression to find fault with my not coming to the cabinet council, I am very free to acknow-

* MS. Narrative of the duchess.

ledge, that my duty to your majesty and country would not give me leave to join in the counsel of a man, who, in my opinion, puts your majesty upon all manner of extremities. And it is not my opinion only, but the opinion of all mankind, that the friendship of France must needs be destructive to your majesty, there being in that court a root of enmity, irreconcileable to your majesty's government, and the religion of these kingdoms. I wish your majesty may never find the want of so faithful a servant, as I have always endeavoured to approve myself to you. I am, with the greatest duty and submission," &c. *

The fallacy of the attempts, which have often been made to inculpate the duke of Marlborough, in a criminal design to restore the Stuart race, from a few garbled letters and vague conversations, exaggerated by jacobite spies and jacobite writers, was fully proved by the exultation with which the exiled family contemplated his fall, and the hopes they conceived of a speedy restoration. His fidelity and zeal, in the service of his country, was no less strikingly evinced by the joy with which the french beheld his disgrace. Though confident in the devotion of the british ministry, Louis the fourteenth felt himself insecure, while the sword was in the hands of a general, who had made the crown totter on his head; but on hearing the intelligence of his fate, he triumphantly exclaimed, " the dismission of Marlborough will do all we can desire!" †

* Conduct, p. 311. † Somerville's Queen Anne, p. 497.

It was impossible to support so violent, harsh, and unjustifiable a measure, as the disgrace of a great and successful commander, on a vague and unfounded charge; while his cause was espoused by a majority of the lords; and so large a portion of the people were indignant at the dishonourable conditions on which the ministry were endeavouring to purchase a peace, after a war of unparalleled success. Another exertion of power was therefore necessary, to obviate the consequences of the proceeding; and for this purpose, the ministers did not hesitate to stretch the prerogative to its utmost limit. On the day following the disgrace of the general, patents were issued for calling twelve new peers to the upper house.

On the second of January, when the lords resumed their deliberations, the new peers were introduced, without opposition; but, to use the words of a contemporary historian, amidst the groans of the house. The tories, indeed, exulted; but the sober whigs cast their eyes to the ground, as if they had been invited to the funeral of the peerage. *

With this reinforcement the ministry obtained a majority sufficient for the prosecution of their plans; "and from this period," to continue the expressions of the same writer, "when the rights of the peers were violated, all things succeeded in parliament, as her majesty, or rather the french monarch, pleased." In consequence of this ascendancy, the lords were induced to acquiesce in

* Cunningham, vol. ii. p. 399.

the brief and sullen reply of the queen to their late address, " that her majesty thought her speech to both houses would have given satisfaction to every body, and that she had given instructions to her plenipotentiaries to act according to the desire of that address."

After the ceremony attending the introduction of the new peers, a message was delivered from the queen, desiring the house to adjourn to the 14th, the day appointed for the meeting of the commons. So unusual a measure as a message of adjournment to one house only, created a warm debate; and the resolution was carried by a majority of no more than thirteen, including the votes of the new members. * On this occasion, historians have recorded a keen sarcasm, uttered by the marquess of Wharton, who, when the question was put to the new peers, treated them as a petty jury, and asked whether they purposed to vote individually, or to convey their decision by their foreman.

* One of the proxies against the adjournment was omitted by mistake, and, consequently, the question was carried solely by the aid of the new auxiliaries to the ministry.

CHAPTER 107.

1712.

Disposal of the places held by Marlborough. — Debates of the commons on the report of the commissioners of public accounts. — Decision of the house against Marlborough for accepting gratuities from the army contractors, and two and a half per cent. from the pay of the foreign auxiliaries. — The report presented to the queen, and an order issued to the attorney-general, to institute a prosecution. — Refutation of the charges. — Inconsistent conduct of the ministry. — Arrival and reception of prince Eugene in England. — His memorials and remonstrances treated with contempt. — Calumnious accusations of conspiracy and assassination, circulated against Eugene, Marlborough, and the whigs. — Departure of Eugene. — Charges against the house of Austria and the dutch, for neglecting to supply their contingents. — Censure of the barrier treaty in the house of commons. — The memorial of the dutch in their own vindication, voted a libel.

On the 24th of January, the report of the commissioners against the duke of Marlborough was taken into consideration by the commons, and a violent debate ensued. The charges were supported with great ability, and equal sophistry, by the jacobites and high tories; among whom we distinguish the names of St. John, Sir William Windham, Sir Thomas Hanmer, and Mr. Edward Harley. The

duke was defended by the best speakers among the whigs and moderate tories, Sir Peter King, Sir Richard Onslow, Mr. Brydges, Mr. William Pulteney, and Sir Charles Hedges, who had countersigned the queen's warrant, as secretary of state. The arguments were principally drawn, on one side from the report itself, and, on the other, from the letter written by the duke at the Hague, as well as from his private communications.

Nor was other satisfactory evidence wanting. Sir John Germaine, who had served as aid-de-camp to the prince of Waldeck in 1689, declared that the present received from the contractors of bread, was a customary perquisite of the commander-in-chief of the british forces in the Netherlands, and that the privilege was equally extended to the general of the dutch army. With regard to the $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., it was proved to have been a voluntary gift, by the signatures of the foreign princes, who had furnished auxiliary troops, and their consent was confirmed by warrants from the queen. It was likewise shewn, that the commissioners had swelled the sum to the utmost, and that they had invidiously brought forward the aggregate of £260,000, to make the greater impression, though the yearly receipt from all the items did not exceed £30,000; while king William had expended annually £50,000, and often more, for the same purpose, and, to judge from effects, had been less faithfully served. In fact, the ministers had frequently declared, that the accounts from the duke of Marlborough were the principal sources of information on which they depended.

These plain facts were opposed, not by negative proofs, but by mere assertions, and by declamations on the abstract principle of right and public welfare; though no evidence was adduced, that the service had suffered the detriment, which was contended to have been the consequence of the contracts and deductions. Those who are acquainted with the nature and spirit of party will not be surprised to find that, even after this complete exculpation, the commons, by a majority of 270 against 165, should have resolved; "That the taking several sums of money, annually, by the duke of Marlborough from the contractors for furnishing the bread and bread waggons, in the Low Countries, was unwarrantable and illegal."

An attempt was here made by the duke's friends to suspend farther proceedings. But their motion of adjournment was negatived by a considerable majority; and a second resolution was passed, declaring, "that the deduction of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., from the pay of the foreign troops in her majesty's service, is public money, and ought to be accounted for." These resolutions were communicated, in an address to the queen, who replied, "I have a great regard for whatever is presented to me by my commons, and will do my part to redress whatever you complain of."

These violent prosecutors, and zealous stewards of the public, seem, however, rather to have regarded effect, than the regular course of justice; for they contented themselves with this resolution, which obtained an order from the queen for the attorney-general to prosecute the duke; although

they did not proceed to an impeachment, or desire the concurrence of the lords. And if we may credit the assertions of a contemporary historian, their forbearance did not originate in any compunctious feeling, but from a resolution to continue the very perquisites, which they had so severely reprobated, to their creature, the new commander-in-chief. *

To give additional effect to this prosecution, they next descended to the secretary and agent of the duke; and, after a long debate, declared the petty gratuity of 500 ducats, given by the contractor for bread to Mr. Cardonel, unwarrantable and illegal, and expelled him from the house. They at the same time decreed the prosecution of Mr. Sweet, for the annual deduction of one per cent., though it was proved to be a customary fee to the paymaster of the forces.

In consequence of the malignity and violence with which the charges had been advanced in the report of the commissioners, and the invidious and shameful suppression of the proofs in his defence, Marlborough was urged to appear in the house of commons, like lord Somers, and enter into a full refutation of the calumnies contained in the report.† But he disdained to submit to a measure, which he considered as an act of degradation, and as a tacit acknowledgment of the crimes of which he was accused. He, however, consented to allow a vindication of himself to be drawn up in a

* Cunningham, vol. ii. book 14.

† A speech on the occasion, drawn up in the hand-writing of lord Godolphin, is preserved in the Marlborough Papers.

regular form, and publicly circulated. This able composition will spare us the labour of refuting the charges of the commissioners, and the arguments with which they were supported; and, therefore, we refer the reader to the document itself, which is printed in all our historical publications. We shall merely observe, that it proved both the partiality and the negligence with which the report had been drawn. First, it contradicted the false assertion, that Cardonel had attested on oath, his ignorance that the duke had received any perquisite from Medina; secondly, it exposed the shameful equivocation of the commissioners, in stating, that *no english* general in the Low Countries, before the duke of Marlborough, had received the perquisite; for he was the *first english general who had commanded in the Low Countries.*

This vindication made a deep impression on the public, and even on many of those members who had voted against him. Indeed, his prosecutors meanly shrunk from the controversy; for, instead of declaring it a libel, which was a measure due to their own dignity, if it was false, they suffered it to remain unanswered.

They afterwards adopted one of those inconsistent measures, into which persons who are not perfectly satisfied with the soundness and regularity of their proceedings, generally fall. In granting the vote of supply, they added the resolution, that the two and a half per cent., which ought to be deducted, or had been deducted from the pay of the foreign troops, should be applied to the public service; a resolution totally unnecessary, if the

transaction was unprecedented, unwarrantable, or illegal.

But they felt a still greater degree of embarrassment, when several of the foreign princes spontaneously treated the resolution of the house of commons as an infringement of their sovereign rights, and represented, by their ministers, that they offered this contribution, as their own free gift, to the duke of Ormond, the new commander-in-chief. It was accepted on his part, without any scruple of conscience, and not marked by any disapprobation from parliament.

Marlborough had continued so firm in his opposition to the peace, that the new ministers exerted their ingenuity to carry their prosecution against him to the utmost extremity. They made the minutest inquiry into the disposal of commissions, with the hope of fixing an additional stigma on his character. But though abuses had existed in this branch of the service during the reign of William, and had even been considered as a justifiable perquisite, all the vigilance of enmity and party spleen could not discover a single instance on which to found an accusation. This failure seems to have excited no small degree of surprise and disappointment, and tended to weaken the charge of peculation, in which the ministry had laboured to involve him.

In the midst of the ferment created by this prosecution, prince Eugene arrived in England, charged with proposals from the emperor, which were calculated to disconcert the schemes of the ministry, and to turn the tide of public opinion.

We have already seen, that in 1710 both Marl-

borough and Godolphin had flattered themselves with the hope of drawing great advantage from the personal interposition of Eugene; and had he visited England at that period, his presence might doubtless have especially contributed to remove their embarrassments, and suspend the overtures to France. Being, however, then detained at Vienna, by the pressure of military and political business, the design of his journey was resumed at the present crisis, with the expectation that his mediation might yet produce the same effect; and that propositions from the emperor, to continue the war, when urged by the weight of his solicitations, might perhaps interrupt the negotiations for peace, and turn the balance in favour of the whigs. Both parties, therefore, contemplated the prospect of his arrival with equal anxiety, though with opposite sentiments of fear and hope. To prevent or retard it, the ministers exerted every effort in their power. Finding, however, all their attempts ineffectual, they sullenly acquiesced; but intimated to him, that measures would be taken to frustrate any intrigue with the opposition, and that the less attention he paid to the duke of Marlborough, the more satisfactory would his conduct be deemed by the queen. *

On the 5th of January, the prince landed at Gravesend, and the first intelligence which met his ear was, the dismission of the duke of Marlborough, and the creation of twelve peers, which restored the ascendancy of the ministerial

* Bolingbroke's Correspondence, *passim*.

party in the house of lords. Drummond, the dependant of St. John, who was sent to receive him, presumed to give the same caution, as had before been intimated, respecting his conduct to his former associate in glory; but he repelled the insinuation with proper dignity: "It is a mistake," he observed, "to suppose that I came to England with an intention to give the least disturbance to the ministry; but it is wholly inconsistent with my honour and temper, to be wanting in respect to a friend, in his adverse fortune, for whom I always professed so much regard in the time of his prosperity." On reaching London he took up his abode in Leicester House, which was prepared for his reception. He was welcomed in the customary forms, by the ministers of all denominations, and received a visit from the duke of Marlborough, whom he treated with peculiar marks of friendship and regard. From the court, he experienced every external mark of respect; but without the slightest token of confidence and esteem.

Eugene was admitted to an audience of the queen on the ensuing evening, at which, only the treasurer and secretary St. John were present. With a short and appropriate compliment, he delivered a letter from the emperor, requesting her majesty to peruse it, as explaining the object of his mission. After slightly glancing over the paper, she said; "I am sorry that the state of my health does not permit me to speak with your highness as often as I wish; but," (pointing to the ministers,) she added, "I have ordered these two gentlemen to receive your proposals, whenever you think

proper." At a future audience, she honoured him with the present of a sword, richly set with diamonds, to the value of £4500.

All ranks vied in their attentions to so distinguished a guest, and he was welcomed by a series of splendid entertainments from persons of every party.

There is no proof that the prince descended to any cabal inconsistent with the dignity of his character; on the contrary, he laboured to gain the leading men of all denominations, and to animate the court and country to a vigorous prosecution of hostilities. He visited both parties with equal attention, and treated those the most opposed to him, in principle and views, with the same outward regard and consideration, as the partisans of the war. But he gave his confidence to the whigs, and did not hesitate to assist at their meetings. In his conduct to the duke of Marlborough, he consulted only the sentiments of that friendship, by which they had been so long united; and, by his behaviour, endeavoured to shew that the respect he entertained for his talents and services was increased, instead of being diminished, by disgrace. He treated the libels, which were published against himself, with dignified contempt, but did not conceal his indignation at the defamation which was hourly heaped on his former colleague, and omitted no opportunity to do justice to his merits. At a dinner with the lord treasurer, his host observed, "I consider this day as the happiest of my life, since I have the honour to see in my house the greatest captain of the age." The

prince, alluding to the dismission of his friend, replied, "If it be so, I owe it to your lordship." Bishop Burnet also, having explained to him a passage in one of the libellous pamphlets of the day, stating that the duke of Marlborough was perhaps *once fortunate*, he rejoined, "It is the greatest commendation which can be given; for he was always successful, and this must imply, that if in *one* single instance he was fortunate, all his other successes were owing to his conduct." *

The prince made many attempts to open a negotiation on the subject of his mission, though without effect. Aware of the prejudices which the ministers fostered against the house of Austria, and the confident assertions of their numerous pamphleteers, that the emperor had never supplied his contingents in men or money, but had thrown the whole burthen of the war on England, he presented a spirited memorial in vindication of his sovereign. In this paper, he declared that the emperor would double his contingents, if necessary; would maintain 103,920 men in the field; would augment his forces in Spain to the number of 30,000, and supply one million of crowns towards the expences of the war in that country. Receiving, however, an equivocal answer from the secretary, he presented a second memorial, on the 18th of February, which soon afterwards appeared in the public papers, and was followed by others, addressed to the ministry, requesting a categorical answer.

* Burnet's History of his Own Time, vol. vi. p. 116. 8vo. edition.

Finding that delays and equivocations were fruitless, the ministry adopted a different method to evade his appeals. On the 26th of February, the secretary imparted the proposals of the emperor, in a message from the queen to the house of commons, and Eugene had the mortification of hearing that the communication was received without the slightest notice. *

The presence of the prince of Savoy, and his strong and urgent representations, together with his intimate connection with Marlborough and the whigs, greatly embarrassed the ministry. Knowing that the articles of the peace, on the conclusion of which their existence depended, would, when published, excite a general ferment, they resorted to the most degrading expedients, to work on the feelings of the queen, and the fears of the public.

For this purpose, they employed the communications of a miscreant jesuit spy, named Plunket, who had officiously furnished them with tales of pretended plots, in which Eugene, Marlborough, Bothmar, and the principal whigs, were to act the part of traitors and assassins, to set fire to the capital, to seize the person of the queen, to murder Oxford and his chief associates, and to place the elector of Hanover on the throne. At the same time, the drunken frolics of some persons of rank, who mixed with the rabble, and, under the name of mohocks, scoured the streets at night, and occasionally mangled unprotected passengers, were brought forward as the first overt acts of treason,

* Chandler's Commons' Debates, vol. iv. p. 461. — History of Europe for 1712, p. 104—108.

and identified with the pretended conspiracy of Eugene and Marlborough.

Oxford and St. John were too prudent to make these ridiculous tales a matter of state deliberation; but the officious jesuit, who was disappointed by their neglect, found more credulous auditors in the duke of Buckingham, president of the council, and lord keeper Harcourt. To them he forwarded the same accounts which he had delivered to the treasurer, enriched doubtless with additional details. These noblemen, duped by his confident assertions, and plausible reports, submitted the intelligence to the cabinet council. But Oxford, however willing to affix a stigma on his political opponents, was conscious that such an idle and exaggerated tale, supported by so slender a foundation, would, if made public, produce a contrary effect, and involve the ministry in the charge of credulity and defamation. He, therefore, dissuaded his credulous and terrified colleagues from imparting it to the parliament, or making it public; but he could not prevent the examination of Plunket before the cabinet council. Here the jesuit repeated the same story, with such observations as were likely to give it additional weight, and received the promise of a provision, and an order to reduce his intelligence to writing.* At his own suggestion he was sent to Holland, to gain additional information from count Gallas, into whose confidence he pretended to have insinuated himself, and to bring the person from whom

* The communications of Plunket are printed in their original shape in Bolingbroke's Correspondence, vol. ii. p. 146. *note.*

he affected to have received the original intelligence. Before his departure, he furnished an abstract of his communications; but on his arrival in Holland, he evaded his pledge to produce his pretended colleague, under the plea that he would not repair to England, without the promise of a maintenance. According to his own confession, he busied himself with forming plans for promoting the interest of the pretender, and was admitted, not only into the confidence of the french plenipotentiaries, D'Uxelles and Polignac, and of the marquis of Torcy, but even of the leading members in the dutch republic; and was intrusted with the secret correspondence of the whigs and the court of Hanover. After a short period, however, he seems to have been abandoned by all, and finally neglected by Oxford, who, as he complains, ceased to listen to his advices.

We have paid more attention to this supposed conspiracy, a story at once infamous and ridiculous, because it had been made the basis of an accusation of the most horrid kind, against Eugene, Marlborough, Bothmar, and the leaders of the whigs, and gravely detailed by some of our subsequent historians. Fortunately, however, we can trace the origin and progress of this base fabrication, which was unknown to the writers of the time. It was first disclosed in the Memoirs of Torcy, printed in 1756; but, in justice to the french secretary, we must observe, that it is described as a mere rumour, and coupled with marks of disbelief. * The tale was treated as it deserved

* On a fait honneur au prince Eugene d'avoir rejetté un projet si odieux; mais la proposition plus hardie *qu'on lui attribue*, étoit encore

in the Continuation of Rapin, published by Dr. Birch, in 1756 *; but it was again offered to the notice of the public in 1758, in Swift's posthumous History of the Four last Years of Queen Anne, a work of which it is needless to give any other character, than that his friend Bolingbroke prevented its publication, calling it a mere party pamphlet. Here the hearsay of Torcy assumes a regular and formidable shape, and the malignity of Swift is shewn in the description. He insinuates that the duke of Marlborough had fixed his arrival in London on the 17th of November, the day of the intended exhibition, which he states to have been contrived, for the purpose of raising a commotion, by his friends and admirers. He adverts to the pretended report of the queen's illness or death, and gravely adds, "*if it were true*, no man could tell what might have been the event." With this he couples the account of the supposititious conspiracy. He describes Eugene as one who had *a natural tincture of italian cruelty in his disposition*, and in whom the occupation of arms had extinguished *all pity and remorse*. He mentions his meetings with Marlborough and the

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plus à detester. Elle consistoit, *si l'on en croyoit des gens peut être mal informés*, à mettre le feu en differens quartiers de la ville de Londres, &c. Marlborough, à la tête d'un nombre de gens armés, devoit survenir dans le moment que l'incendie causeroit le plus de desordre, et se saisir de la Tour, enfin de la personne de la reine, qu'on auroit obligée alors de cesser le parlement, d'en convoquer un nouveau, pour examiner librement les correspondences et negotiations avec la France, et punir à la dernière rigueur ceux qui les auroient entretenues.—Mem. de Torci, t. iii. p. 268, 269.

* Vol. xvii. p. 468. *note*, 8vo.

whigs, and then gives the account of the treasons and assassinations which they projected, after the preparatory excesses and cruelties of the mohocks. This, he tells us, is not founded *on slight grounds, or doubtful surmises*, but is derived from the information of more than one person, who was present, and confirmed, past all contradiction, by *several intercepted* letters. To complete the atrocious picture, he adds, "the rage of the defeated party was so far inflamed as to make them capable of some counsels, yet more violent and desperate than this." *

We shall merely apply to this malignant writer an expression corresponding with that which he has himself applied to prince Eugene; namely, that he was one in whom the feelings of party had extinguished all regard for candour, and all respect to truth.

Next, the public was regaled with the full and complete detail of this fabricated plot, by Macpherson, who, in 1775, published the narrative of the spy himself, under the title of Rogers's or Plunket's Dream, and in 1776, interwove it in his history, with as much credulity and malice as Swift himself. †

We cannot quit this unpleasant subject, without a few more remarks. The whole foundation of this atrocious calumny is derived from so polluted a source, as the obscure jesuit and jacobite spy, who afterwards followed the trade of an informer

* Swift's Four last Years of Queen Anne, p. 59.

† Macpherson's Papers, vol. ii. p. 451. — History, vol. ii. p. 531.

and propagator of falsehood, in the reign of George the first. To his information Torcy was indebted, as is clear by the words he employs; and from the same despicable authority, Swift obtained his statements, notwithstanding "his additional notices drawn from subsequent testimonies and intercepted letters;" for he adopts the very words of Plunket's abstract, which he probably derived from secretary St. John.

With regard to the correspondence and documents of Plunket, published by Macpherson, they furnish sufficient evidence to form a proper estimate of his character and views, and enable us to judge how unworthy his reports are of the slightest credit. It is, however, lamentable that the reputation of great men should thus lie at the mercy of obscure and mercenary spies, who make a trade of falsehood and mischief; and it is the duty of an historian to hold up the authors and propagators of such reports to the contempt and infamy they deserve. This motive, alone, could have induced us to devote a page to the refutation of calumnies so contemptible.

The accounts, however incredible and infamous, produced all the effect which the treasurer desired, by increasing the panic of the queen, aggravating her displeasure against the duke of Marlborough, and exciting her anxiety for the departure of Eugene, and the conclusion of peace.

Eugene, in the mean time, felt the ill effects of the prejudice which had been raised against him, and finding all his proposals treated with neglect by the queen and ministers, retired with disgust

from a country, distracted with party feuds, neglectful of its best interests, and hastening to accomplish its own dishonour. He embarked at Greenwich on the 17th of March, and returned to Holland, to deplore the farther result of the disgraceful policy which he had witnessed in England.

Having thus contemptuously treated the emperor, as head of the grand alliance, and rejected the proposals of Eugene, the ministers loaded with no less indignity the dutch, with whom England had been long identified in bands of interest and amity.

The reader will have perceived from the correspondence of Marlborough, during the whole course of the war, his extreme anxiety to retain in strict union the members of the grand alliance. Knowing well the embarrassed situation of the austrian finances, the struggle of contending factions in Holland, the spirit of commercial jealousy, which existed between England and the republic, and the constant bickerings between the courts of Vienna and Turin, he laboured to restrain the murmurs of the english cabinet, and to excuse the deficiency of the supplies and contingents, which the allies had promised to furnish. He overlooked also the endless disappointments to which he was himself exposed. In his zeal to attain the great end of the confederacy, the reduction of french preponderance, he incessantly endeavoured to conciliate those jarring interests and interminable jealousies, which are inseparable from an extensive coalition of different powers, embarked in a common

cause. The effect of this policy was, the progressive decline of France, and the gradual ascendancy of the allies; and if his views had not been counteracted by the change of ministry, and the court of France had not been encouraged to persevere, by the divisions in England, the consequence must inevitably have been, the attainment of an honourable and secure peace, on the terms dictated by the allies. It was, indeed, the conviction of Marlborough, that the humiliation of France had been delayed by the domestic feuds in England, and his opinion is corroborated by the avowal of Torcy and the french writers, that France was saved by our disgraceful party contests.

The views and policy of the new ministers were totally different. Sensible that they could not support themselves, without the assistance of the french cabinet, and the co-operation of the court of St. Germain, they determined to sacrifice every object for the attainment of a speedy peace. Hence they were anxious to divide the members of the grand alliance, and to break that connection which subsisted between Holland, England, and Austria. With this view, they eagerly profited by those defections in furnishing their quota, of which the dutch and austrians had exhibited frequent instances. They laboured also to excite that commercial jealousy, which they knew was fostered in England against the trade and resources of the republic. Their dependent writers were encouraged to make these subjects the theme of invective, and the able, though sophistical pen

of Swift was employed with effect in deluding the public mind. *

When these misrepresentations had made the expected impression, the ministry themselves came forward to give it the sanction of public authority. Indeed, we trace in the earliest correspondence of St. John, the germ of those complaints, which were afterwards expanded into a solemn and national charge.

In the commencement of February the attack was formally begun in the house of commons, by censuring the conduct of the dutch, in failing to supply their stipulated quotas of troops and money, and by greatly exaggerating the real deficiency. The barrier treaty was also stigmatized as an infamous compact, and as a total dereliction of the british interest for the sake of Holland. These complaints were embodied in a series of resolutions, which were presented to the sovereign, and terminated with the declaration, "that lord Townshend was unauthorized to conclude several of the articles of the barrier treaty, and that all who advised its ratification, were enemies to the queen and kingdom."

So severe an invective drew from the States a spirited, but respectful letter to the queen, which was followed by a long memorial, in refutation of the charges, and in vindication of the barrier treaty. The english commons did not, however, chuse to meet the refutation; but maintained their resolutions, by voting the memorial itself a false,

* The most celebrated of his productions on this head were, the "Conduct of the Allies," and the "Account of the Barrier Treaty."

scandalous and malicious libel, and ordering those by whom it was printed and published in England, to be taken into custody for a breach of privilege. Such a solemn decision of the legislature increased the impression, which had been already made on the public mind; and the house of Austria and the dutch became the objects of that odium, which had hitherto been solely directed against the common enemy. *

* Journals and Debates; — Historians of the time.

CHAPTER 108.

1712.

Opening of the conferences at Utrecht.—Treacherous conduct of England.—Diviaed situation and contradictory demands of the allies.—Extravagant proposals of France.—Embarrassment of the british ministry.—Deaths of the dauphin, his consort, and their eldest son.—Attempts to prevent the union of France and Spain under the same head.—Continuation of the clandestine intercourse between England and France.—Firmness and address of Louis.—The british ministry accept the promise of a renunciation of the French crown, by Philip, and agree to an eventual cessation of arms, on the delivery of Dunkirk.—Preparations for the campaign.—The duke of Ormond joins the army.—His mysterious conduct and secret instructions from the british cabinet.—Refuses to join in attacking the enemy.—Debate in the house of lords on the restrictive orders sent to the british general.—Marlborough challenges earl Poulett, for an injurious reflection uttered during the discussion.—Letter from prince Eugene on the conduct of Ormond.

During these transactions the conferences for the negotiations of peace were opened at Utrecht; and the result was such as was naturally to be anticipated from the conduct of England. The grand principle of the alliance had already been abandoned, by the separate preliminaries clandestinely signed with Mesnager, on the 23d of October; and the proceedings of the british cabinet reduced all the allies to the necessity of presenting

their claims individually, instead of embodying in one series of articles, the united interests of the whole confederacy. Besides, the example of ill faith, which they had recently manifested, had sown the germs of jealousy, suspicion, and discord; for each member of the alliance, instead of promoting the common interest, was anxious to attain its own particular object, at the expence of the rest.

While the british plenipotentiaries were embarrassed by the contradictory or equivocal orders of their own government *, the members of the confederacy presented extravagant and inadmissible

* As a specimen of these equivocal orders, we shall here insert an article in the instructions to the british plenipotentiary.

" If it shall be thought proper to begin by the disposition of the spanish monarchy, you are to insist that the security and the reasonable satisfaction which the allies expect, and which his most christian majesty has promised, cannot be obtained, if Spain and the West Indies be allotted to any branch of the house of Bourbon. And in case the enemy should object, as the imperial ministers have done, that the second article of the seven, signed by the sieur Mesnager, implies that the duke of Anjou shall continue on the throne of Spain, you are to insist that those articles, as far as they extend, are, indeed, binding to France; but that they lay neither us, nor our allies, under any positive obligation. That they were received only as inducements for opening of the conferences, and that an agreement to take measures for preventing the crowns of France and Spain from being ever united upon one head, cannot be construed, by any means, to imply that the latter should remain to the present possessor; since, by the sixth article of the preliminaries made in 1709, this very point was insisted upon, although, in the same preliminaries, it was agreed that the duke of Anjou should abandon the throne in Spain. In treating, therefore, upon this head, you are to consider, and settle, in conjunction with our allies, the most effectual measures for preventing the crowns of France and Spain from being *ever* united *on one head;* and the conditions, which shall be agreed as necessary to this effect, you are peremptorily to insist upon." — Instructions to the lord privy seal, viz. the bishop of Bristol, contained in secretary St. John's letter, Dec. 28. 1711. — Bolingbroke's Correspondence, vol. ii. p. 93.

demands, with a view to obstruct the progress of the negotiation. Louis was thus enabled to play on the hopes and fears of all, and encouraged even to rise in his pretensions; for, on the 11th of February, the french plenipotentiaries delivered a new series of proposals.

Spain and the Indies were to remain in the possession of Philip; of the exterior provinces, the Netherlands were to be consigned to the elector of Bavaria; and all the italian dominions, except Sicily, which was reserved for future discussion, were to be yielded to the emperor. In return for this arrangement, the title of the queen and the protestant succession were to be acknowledged, on the signature of peace; and the Spanish Netherlands, as transferred to the elector of Bavaria, were to be considered as a barrier for the dutch, who were allowed to garrison such of the towns, as they might deem proper, at the expence of the country. Under the plea of augmenting this barrier, Furnes, Knoque, Ypres, and Menin, were to be ceded by the french, in exchange for Aire, St. Venant, Bethune, and Douay; and for the rasure of Dunkirk, which had been so peremptorily demanded by England, the restoration of Lille and Tournay was required. Towards the empire and Italy, the frontier was to remain the same as at the commencement of the war, by which France would retain, on the side of the Rhine, Landau and Friburg; and on that of the Alps, Exilles and Fenestrelles.

Proposals so contradictory, not only to the principles of the grand alliance, but to the clandestine

preliminaries already signed by the british ministry, awakened the deepest feelings of surprise and indignation. The whigs were roused, and even the warmest adherents of the government could not conceal their chagrin and mortification, at a result so different from the hopes they had been suffered to entertain.

The consequence of the prevailing sentiment was an animated address, moved in the house of peers by lord Halifax, on the 15th of February. It expressed surprise and indignation at the terms offered by France to the queen and her allies, and testified their readiness to support her majesty, with zeal and affection, and with their lives and fortunes, in carrying on the war in conjunction with her allies, till a safe and honourable peace could be secured. The ministers shrunk from a question, which involved an investigation of their own conduct, and suffered the address to be carried without a division. Even the answer from the throne manifested their embarrassment; for the queen delivered a dry and formal reply, merely thanking the house for their zeal and assurances of support.

Oxford and St. John felt that they could not connive at the encroaching spirit of France, or submit to demands which were to be expected only from a victorious enemy. The secretary laboured, therefore, to infuse his own fears into the french cabinet, and to convince them, that any farther attempt to trifle with a high-spirited nation, might again produce the mischiefs from which they had recently escaped. In communicating the instruc-

tions arising out of this event to the british plenipotentiaries, he observes; " The french will see that there is a possibility of reviving the love of war in our people, by the indignation which has been expressed at the plan given in at Utrecht."

A continuance of the negotiation in the same mode, was evidently too dangerous to be risked; and, therefore, no alternative remained, but to accept the overtures of Torcy, for the establishment of a private and entire correspondence, between the plenipotentiaries of the two crowns, in order to settle the conditions of peace, without the intervention of others, and then to dictate terms to the other allies.

At the moment when this arrangement was made to suspend the public negotiations, a melancholy catastrophe in the royal family of France produced new and unexpected embarrassments.

Louis XIV. had now reached his 73d year, and at the close of a long and disastrous war, had seen the divisions of his enemies turned to his advantage; and, instead of receiving the law of the conqueror, had been nearly enabled to dictate his own conditions. Suffering under the bodily infirmities incident to advanced age, he was anxious to hasten the conclusion of a negotiation, which was to give peace to his distracted country, and to fix the crown of Spain in his family. In the preceding year he had lost his only son, the dauphin; but in his grandson, the duke of Burgundy, he beheld the solace of his old age, and the future blessing of his subjects. This pious and amiable prince, who was now in the bloom of youth and health, was united

with a young and beautiful wife, who had borne him two sons, and was likely to be the fruitful mother of a numerous offspring. In the midst of these auspicious appearances, the monarch was suddenly involved in the deepest affliction: he was doomed, in the decline of life, to behold his descendants swept away, and that peace, which was so necessary for himself, his kingdoms, and his family, in danger of being wrested from his grasp.

On the 12th of February the young dauphiness was hurried to the grave, by a malignant fever, in the 27th year of her age; on the 18th, her disconsolate husband fell a victim to the same disorder. In a few days the elder of their two sons was entombed with his parents, and the survivor, a sickly infant in the cradle, was in the most imminent danger.

The aged monarch supported these accumulated losses with the firmness of a man, and the piety of a christian: he did not suffer his grief to vanquish his judgment, or suppress his zeal for the safety of his kingdom. Without a moment's delay, he proceeded to regulate the succession, now become a matter of difficult arrangement, and laboured to tranquillise the alarms of his friends in England, who saw in the sickly infant, the only bar to the union of the crowns of France and Spain, on the head of Philip, the presumptive heir.

In this unexpected predicament, additional motives impelled the british ministry to continue their clandestine negotiation. The general conferences at Utrecht were immediately suspended,

and an amicable discussion took place between the two cabinets, on the important question connected with these melancholy events. To prevent the union of the two crowns in the same person, the queen demanded that Philip should renounce either Spain or France. Louis himself was no less anxious to avert from his country the evils of a disputed succession, and the renewal of that war, which had been so disastrous to himself and to his subjects.

After many difficulties and discussions, Philip refused to relinquish the crown of Spain; and Louis and his ministers unequivocally declared, that, by the french law, he could not abandon his title to the succession of France. In this dilemma, the ministers had no alternative, but to continue the war with accumulated risk, or to accept a condition, which the french court frankly pronounced to be nugatory. * They obtained, however, a promise that such a renunciation should be formally made and guarantied in France and Spain; and, on this frail security, prepared to lay the basis of peace, and the future tranquillity of Europe. They even entered into a private stipulation to desert their allies, if they could not alarm or allure them into the acceptance of these conditions. To obviate the effect of their opposition, they agreed to a future suspension of arms for two months, and in return for the temporary cession of Dunkirk, promised that the british troops, and their auxiliaries, should withdraw from the contest. To tempt the dutch to follow their

* See this subject fully treated in the Memoirs of the Bourbon Kings of Spain, chap. 19.

example, Ypres was offered to the republic, on the same terms as Dunkirk to England.

This dishonourable compromise at once rendered null all the mighty preparations, which had been concerted by the allies to carry on the war with increasing vigour; but it was managed with so much address and mystery, as not even to be communicated to the duke of Ormond, the new commander of the british forces; for on his arrival at the Hague, he gave the strongest assurances that he was empowered to co-operate, to the fullest extent, with the confederate army; and that his royal mistress was resolved to prosecute the war with redoubled energy.

The conduct of England, however, had awakened such suspicions in the dutch government, that they appointed prince Eugene their generalissimo, in preference to Ormond, and withheld from him all communication on the plans of the campaign, referring him to the prince and their field deputies.

Eugene had, in April, already assembled a larger force than he had ever before ranged under his banners; and the dutch had followed this spirited example, in the full supply of their contingent. The imperial general had also concerted with the deputies arrangements for carrying into execution the plan so ably conceived by his disgraced colleague in the preceding campaign, in which he trusted the duke of Ormond would concur. Leaving the larger places of Cambray and Arras, he purposed to besiege Quesnoy and Landrecies at the same time, an enterprise which he hoped to bring to a speedy termination. This conquest having broken

the last link in the french barrier, he intended to pour his victorious force into the open provinces, and speedily reduce the enemy to accept the terms which they had repeatedly rejected.

At this critical period, he had the satisfaction to hail the arrival of Ormond, and to ascertain that the collective force of the confederate troops did not amount to less than 145 battalions, and 295 squadrons; forming an aggregate of 122,000 effective men, with 120 cannon, 16 howitzers, and 40 pontoons.

Such an accumulation of force had already carried dismay into the court and cabinet of Louis.

Notwithstanding the servility which the french monarch had experienced from the british ministry, he could not contemplate the movements of this mighty host without alarm. The army of Villars, the last hope of France, amounted only to 100,000 men, ill equipped, scantily supplied with artillery, and bereft of confidence by a series of unparalleled defeats. It was to be dreaded that one of those accidents, which are above all human controul, might produce a conflict, which could not fail to prove disastrous, with forces so unequally opposed; and the immediate and least dangerous consequence was, the fall of the capital, and all the provinces north of the Loire. Some of the courtiers even urged their aged monarch to withdraw to Blois; but though borne down by grief and infirmity, Louis was not depressed by misfortune. In taking leave of Villars, he observed, "Behold my situation. Few instances have occurred of calamities like mine, to lose, in so short a space of time, my grand-

son, his consort, and their eldest son; all hopeful, and tenderly beloved." Suppressing his sorrows, he then adverted to the state of his army, and the representations which had been made to abandon his capital, in order to avoid the danger attending a defeat. He added, "Armies so considerable as mine are seldom completely routed; and the greater part may retire to the Somme. I know that river; it is difficult to pass, and there are still fortresses which may be rendered defensible. Should such a misfortune occur, I will instantly go to Peronne or St. Quintin, collect all my troops, and with you will risk a last effort, determined to perish or save the state."* Such, indeed, must have been the fatal alternative, to which all the intrigues, encroachments, and usurpations of Louis must have led, had he not drawn greater advantage from the divisions and misconduct of his enemies, than from the colossal power which had once overshadowed Europe.

Unfortunately, the measures of the queen and ministry, frustrated the lingering hopes which the lovers of their country still ventured to entertain. For, at the very moment when the british general joined Eugene at Tournay, he received a communication from St. John, dated April 25, enjoining him to be jealous of his colleague, and directing him, in the name of the queen, to be cautious in engaging in an action, unless in the case of a very apparent and considerable advantage, under the plea that he should wait till he was

* Memoires de Villars, t. ii. p. 197.

strengthened by the arrival of all the imperial troops.* But even now, Ormond probably did not suspect the scheme of treachery of which this was the commencement; for he appeared eager to signalise his military command. To the anxious enquiries of Eugene, whether he had authority to co-operate vigorously in the campaign, he replied, that he was invested with the same powers as the duke of Marlborough, and was ready to join in attacking the enemy. In consequence of this reply, arrangements were made for forcing the hostile camp, and besieging Quesnoy.

But these operations were suspended by subsequent instructions from the british cabinet. The critical points of the negotiation having been partly settled, and the renunciation by Philip of either France or Spain solemnly promised, and that promise guarantied by Louis, mystery was no longer necessary. Secretary St. John, therefore, on the 10th of May, communicated these specific orders to the duke of Ormond: —

" Her majesty, my lord, has reason to believe, that we shall come to an agreement upon the great article of the union of the two monarchies, as soon as a courier, sent from Versailles to Madrid, can return. It is, therefore, the queen's positive command to your grace, that you avoid engaging in any siege, or hazarding a battle, till you have farther orders from her majesty. I am, at the same time, directed to let your grace know, that the queen would have you disguise the receipt of

* Bolingbroke's Correspondence, vol. ii. p. 319.

this order; and her majesty thinks that you cannot want pretences for conducting yourself, so as to answer her ends, without owning that, which might at present have an ill effect, if it was publicly known. The queen cannot think with patience of sacrificing men, when there is a fair prospect of attaining her purpose another way; and, besides, she will not suffer herself to be exposed to the reproach of having retarded, by the events of the campaign, a negotiation which might otherwise have been as good as concluded, in a few days. I shall very soon dispatch another express to your grace, and am, &c.

"P. S. I had almost forgot to tell your grace, that communication is made of this order to the court of France; so that if the marechal de Villars takes, in any private way, notice of it to you, your grace will answer accordingly." *

In consequence of these instructions, Ormond soon afterwards entered into a secret correspondence with Villars, and declaring that they were no longer enemies, obviated the alarms which the french general might have conceived, at the approach of the confederates, by announcing that the future movements of the troops under his own command, were intended merely for forage and subsistence, not for offensive operations.

In the midst of this clandestine intercourse, the allied forces had passed the Scheld, and took post between Noyelles and the Briase, the quarters of Ormond being at Solenne, and those of Eugene at

* Bolingbroke's Correspondence, vol. ii. p. 320.

Haspre, with the apparent purpose of approaching the enemy, who were posted between Câtelet and Cambray, on the other side of the Scheld.

Suspecting, however, the treachery of his colleague, Eugene took an immediate opportunity to put his sincerity to the test. The reconnoitring parties having reported that the situation of the enemy was open and exposed, the imperial commander made the requisite preparations; and on the morning of the 28th of May solicited Ormond to concur in an attack of the hostile camp. This proposal at once disclosed the disgraceful situation in which the british commander was placed. He was confounded by the summons: and after making a futile excuse till noon, sent an evasive answer, requesting that the design might be postponed for some days. His reply exhibited all the treachery practised by the british ministry. Eugene and the dutch deputies warmly protested against such dishonourable conduct; but, anxious to draw the utmost advantage from the presence of the british troops, he proposed to besiege Quesnoy. Ormond felt too much humbled to object to this solicitation; and, as Villars had made a retrograde movement, the investment took place the same day.

This proceeding exciting universal indignation, complaints and remonstrances were preparing from every quarter; while the intelligence being speedily conveyed to England, by the expostulatory letters of prince Eugene, the sensation was scarcely less deeply felt than at the army.

Hitherto Marlborough had contented himself

with a silent opposition to the measures of the new ministry; but he could not tamely acquiesce in this degradation of the national honour, and, therefore, heartily concurred in the determination of the whigs to arraign so flagrant a breach of faith. The public indignation was not suffered to cool; for, on the 28th of May, the question was submitted to the cognisance of parliament.

Lord Halifax opened the debate: after representing the necessity and occasion of the war, he enumerated the glorious successes which had signalised the arms of the allies, and which had brought the common enemy of Christendom to such extremities. "But," he added, "this pleasant prospect is totally defaced, by the orders given to the queen's general, not to act offensively against the enemy. I pity that heroic and gallant general, who, on other occasions, took delight to charge the most formidable corps, and strongest squadrons, and cannot but be uneasy at his being fettered with shackles, and thereby prevented from reaping the glory he might well expect from leading on troops so accustomed to conquer. I pity the allies, who have relied upon the aid and friendship of the british nation, perceiving that what they have done, at so great an expence of blood and treasure, is of no effect, as they will be exposed to the revenge of that power against whom they have been so active. I pity the queen, her royal successors, and the present and future generations of Britain, when they shall find the nation deeply involved in debt, and that the common enemy, who occasioned it, tho' once near being suffi-

ciently humbled, does still triumph and design their ruin, and are informed that this proceeds from the conduct of the british cabinet, in neglecting to make a right use of those advantages and happy occasions, which their own courage, with God's blessing, had gained, and put into their hands. I do not pretend to blame the queen, but the counsels and representations of those evil counsellors, who being confided in by her, manifested so little concern for her majesty and her people's honour, prosperity, and security, that they persuaded her to approve such measures, and emit such orders, as were attended with these, and a great many other disgraceful and pernicious consequences. And as I am fully apprised of her majesty's good intentions to rectify every thing that is amiss, and of her great regard for your lordships' opinions in this weighty affair, I presume to move that an humble address be presented to her majesty, setting forth the bad and dishonourable effects of the restrictive order to her general; and beseeching her to recall the same, and direct him to act offensively, in conjunction with the other allies, against the common enemy."

At the conclusion of this speech, Marlborough rose, and with peculiar energy, observed: "After what has been said by the noble lord, nothing remains for me or any other person, but to second the motion; yet I will venture to trouble your lordships with a few observations on this subject. Altho' the negotiations for peace may be far advanced, yet I can see no reason, which should induce the allies or ourselves to remain inactive,

and not push on the war with the utmost vigour, as we have incurred the expence of recruiting the army for the service of another year. That army is now in the field, and it has often occurred, that a victory or a siege produced good effects and manifold advantages, when treaties were still farther advanced than is the present negotiation. And as I am of opinion, that we should make the most we can for ourselves, the only infallible way to force France to an entire submission, is, to besiege and occupy Cambray or Arras *, and to carry the war into the heart of that kingdom. But as the troops of the enemy are now encamped, it is impossible to execute this design, unless they are withdrawn from their position; and as they cannot be reduced to retire, for want of provision, they must be attacked and forced. For the truth of what I say, I appeal to a noble duke (looking at the duke of Argyle), whom I rejoice to see in the house, because he knows the country, and is as good a judge of these matters as any person now alive. These observations I have deemed fit to represent to your lordships, and hope they will induce your lordships to agree to the motion, which I second very heartily."

This appeal drew forth a reply from the duke of Argyle, whose enmity to his former patron was unbounded. "Not being apprized of this mo-

* In Lockhart, it is Cambray or Valenciennes; but this is probably a mistake, because in the other accounts of the debates, the places alluded to by the duke of Argyle in his reply, are Cambray and Arras; and this alteration is justified by the operations in the campaign of 1710. — See chapter 93.

tion," he said, " I confess that I am unprepared for the question, and, therefore, should not have troubled your lordships, had not the noble duke, who spoke last, appealed to me for my opinion. I will declare it with my usual openness and candour. I do indeed perfectly know the country, and the situation of the enemy, in their present camp; and I agree with the noble duke, that it is impossible to remove them, except by attacking and driving them away, and until that is effected, neither of the two sieges alluded to can be undertaken. I likewise agree, that the capture of these towns is the most effectual way to carry on the war with advantage, and would be a fatal blow to France."

He then captiously and unjustly censured the military conduct of the great commander in the campaign of 1710.

" I wonder, indeed," he added, " that the noble duke should now have formed *this opinion*, after maintaining *another opinion*, when he had it in his power to carry into effect the same operation in a former campaign. For I then pressed his grace, as the most effectual and speedy method of procuring a safe and honourable peace, to besiege Arras and Cambray, and march into France. But he had then other sentiments; and, instead of besieging these fortresses, made a retrograde movement, losing much time, and exhausting much blood and treasure, in reducing Bethune, Aire, and St. Venant, towns of comparatively little importance. But as for his advice to attack the enemy, I must be so bold as to tell the noble duke that he knows the camp and hostile army to be

much stronger than when he last attacked them * ; and he need not be reminded with how much difficulty he then gained that camp, and how much blood was sacrificed, even so much that another or two such victories would undo us. Should the allies now fail in the attempt, and be defeated, the consequences would redound to the advantage of France." He concluded by expatiating on the perils of war, and argued against any hazardous operation, as the very conquests which might be effected, might be rendered nugatory by the terms of the peace which was now nearly concluded.

The speech of the duke of Argyle, which was delivered with his usual warmth and energy, made a deep impression, and produced the greater effect, because he was known to have been offended by the ministry, and had bitterly censured their narrow and impolitic views. By those who knew his temper, or were unacquainted with his rooted antipathy to Marlborough, it was concluded that nothing but absolute conviction could have extorted so cruel an invective against his former commander, and that so vehement a defence of the ministry, could only be prompted by a consciousness, that the terms of the intended peace were neither dishonourable nor injurious. This impression gave weight to the arguments of the ministerial party. In the course of the debate, some of the whig lords having pressed the minister to inform the house, whether any orders of re-

* Meaning at Malplaquet.

straint had been sent to the british commander, he replied, that they who had the honour to serve the queen could not reveal the orders given to the general, without particular directions, and, in his opinion, they were not proper to be divulged. But he would venture to say, that if the duke of Ormond had refused to act offensively, he doubtless followed his instructions; and it was prudent not to hazard a battle, upon the point of concluding a good peace, considering that the enemy was apt to break his word.

Wharton adroitly profited by this avowal, observing, that he rejoiced in finding that noble lord so candid in acknowledging the insincerity of France; but that was, in his opinion, a strong reason for not only not keeping measures with such an enemy, but even for pushing him with the utmost vigour, till he was reduced to the necessity of acting honestly. To this sarcasm the treasurer replied, "Although the duke of Ormond might have refused to hazard a general action, he could positively declare that he would not decline joining with the allies in a siege, and that orders had been sent to him for that purpose."

This remark again roused the duke of Marlborough, who observed that he could not reconcile the orders, said to be given to the general, with the rules of war; for it was impossible, he said, to carry on a siege without hazarding a battle, or making a shameful retreat, if the enemy attempted a relief.

The duke of Devonshire then declared, that by the proximity of blood, he was more concerned

for the duke of Ormond's reputation than any other; and, therefore, he could not forbear observing, that he was surprised to hear any one dare make use of a nobleman of the first rank, and of so distinguished a character, as an instrument of so disgraceful a proceeding.

This observation drew from the ministerial advocates the customary reflections on the conduct of Marlborough, who appears to have been the object to which they directed their shafts on all occasions. Earl Poulett replied, "No one can doubt the duke of Ormond's bravery; but he does not resemble a certain general, who led troops to the slaughter, to cause a great number of officers to be knocked on the head, in a battle, or against stone walls, in order to fill his pocket, by disposing of their commissions." This imputation, perhaps the most vulgar and opprobrious which had ever been uttered in the house of peers, was heard by Marlborough with the aspect of silent contempt, and the debate proceeded with renewed warmth. The whigs strenuously exerted themselves to remove the impression occasioned by the speech of Argyle, and assailed the ministers with complaints of the mystery observed in the negotiation, surmising that such caution could be used, only to conceal dishonourable proceedings. A strong appeal being particularly made to lord Strafford, to afford some information on the transactions in which he had been engaged, as one of the plenipotentiaries, the treasurer found it necessary to pledge himself, that in a few days he would lay before parliament the terms which had been

concluded, and which, he doubted not, would give entire satisfaction to every member of that house, as well as to all true englishmen. In reply to the farther insinuation, that the british government had so far forgot its honour as to engage in a separate peace, he rejoined, without hesitation, "Nothing of that nature has ever been intended; for such a peace would be so foolish, villainous, and knavish, that every servant of the queen must answer for it with his head to the nation. The allies," he added, "are acquainted with our proceedings, and satisfied with the terms."

So solemn a pledge from the principal servant of the crown, admitted no farther debate; and Halifax, perceiving the effect it had produced, made an effort to withdraw his motion. The ministry, however, were determined to complete their triumph; and, on a division, the question was lost by 68 voices against 40. This decision was combated in a severe protest signed by twenty-seven peers, among whom we distinguish the name of Marlborough. The protest was afterwards expunged by order of the house; but no precaution could prevent its diffusion, by means of the press, and all attempts to discover the printer and publisher were ineffectual. *

* This debate is given in a very confused and unsatisfactory manner in the parliamentary records of the times. A more detailed and animated account is preserved by Lockhart, who was probably present on the occasion. He has, however, recorded only the speeches of Halifax, Marlborough, and Argyle. The two first we have exactly copied, but have omitted several passages in the speech of Argyle; because Lockhart has evidently attributed to him many expressions which fell from

The cruel reflection of earl Poulett made a deeper impression on the feelings of the duke of Marlborough than all the indignities to which he had before been exposed; although it would have been more becoming his magnanimous spirit to have buried it in oblivion, and left it to the contempt it deserved. But on the rising of the house, he sent a message by lord Mohun to the earl, with an invitation to take the air in the country. The earl demanding, whether this was meant as a challenge, received for answer, that the message required no explanation. Lord Mohun added, "I shall accompany the duke of Marlborough, and your lordship would do well to provide a second."

This unexpected summons awakened an emotion in lord Poulett, which he could not conceal from his lady on his return. A hint being instantly conveyed to lord Dartmouth, he placed lord Poulett under arrest, and was soon afterwards charged with an order by the queen, enjoining the duke of Marlborough to proceed no farther in the affair. The duke complied, and by the intervention of the lord treasurer, an apparent reconciliation took place; but the transaction exposed Marlborough to much invective from the writers of the day, and he was bitterly censured by the Examiner, for setting the example of party duels.

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other members of the opposition. In particular, he has imputed to him the cruel aspersion pronounced by earl Poulett against the duke of Marlborough. — See Lockhart's Papers, vol. i. p. 392.

The other parts of the debate we have drawn from a collation of the respective accounts in the History of Europe for 1712; Boyer's Reign of Queen Anne; and Political State; Cunningham; Chandler's Debates; Continuation of Rapin; and Lediard.

We close the account of these impolitic restrictions on the british commander, with an indignant letter from prince Eugene to the duke of Marlborough, which displays their injurious effect, in checking the triumphant career of the confederate army.

" *Hayn, June* 9. — I am gratified with this safe opportunity of writing to your highness. You are doubtless informed of what has passed here and at Utrecht. There is surely no example of such proceedings, at the time when contrary assurances were solemnly given. Your highness is sufficiently acquainted with me, to be convinced that I am not accustomed to boast, and I do not easily form flattering hopes; but I do not hesitate in declaring to you, that it was entirely in our power to force the enemy to risk a battle to their disadvantage, or repass the Somme; and even had this operation been objected to, we might, at all events, have besieged Quesnoy and Landrecies, at the same time. But the orders given to the duke of Ormond having prevented it, the siege of Quesnoy is now carrying on with the troops of my army, and with those in the pay of the States. I refer you, as to the rest, to general Cadogan, who will inform you of all the particulars, as I have communicated them to him. I cannot sufficiently commend his conduct and activity." *

* Translation from the french original.

CHAPTER 109.

1712.

The queen communicates to parliament the outlines of the treaty with France.—General dissatisfaction at the terms.—Motion for an address — Opposed by Marlborough and the whigs.—Carried in favour of the ministry.—Prorogation of parliament. — Continuation of the clandestine intercourse with France. — Secret arrangement for a suspension of arms. — The allies reject the proposed conditions.—Refusal of the auxiliaries to march.—Separation of the british troops from the confederate army.—Ormond takes possession of Ghent and Bruges.—Reluctant cession of Dunkirk. — New misunderstanding with France. — St. John created lord Bolingbroke.—His mission to Paris. — Arrangement relative to the points in dispute, and prolongation of the armistice.—Prosecution of the campaign. —Reverses of the confederates.—The siege of Landrecies raised. — Loss of Quesnoy and Bouchain. — State of the war in other quarters. — Death of lord Godolphin. — Motives of the resolution adopted by Marlborough to withdraw from England. — Obtains a passport through the agency of Maynwaring and the interposition of Oxford.—Duel of the duke of Hamilton and lord Mohun.—Marlborough calumniated.

After the confident assertions of the treasurer in the house of lords, and similar assurances given by the secretary in the house commons, the public impatiently waited the communication of the treaty, which had created the most sanguine expectations. Great, therefore, were the surprise. indignation, and

disappointment, which pervaded every patriotic bosom, when the outlines of the intended peace were officially disclosed.

On the 6th of June, the queen, in a longer and more laboured speech than usual, imparted the substance of certain preliminaries, which were to form the basis of a general peace. After touching on the difficulties which had occurred in maturing this arrangement, her majesty dwelt on the measures adopted for securing the protestant succession in the house of Hanover, as *the object nearest her heart;* and stated that additional security had been given to this provision, by the removal of that person out of the dominions of France, who had pretended to disturb this settlement. *

She then adverted to that article, which she incorrectly characterised as containing the grand principle of the alliance; viz. the separation of the crowns of France and Spain, for accomplishing which, she affected the utmost solicitude.

The duke of Anjou was to renounce for ever, for himself and his issue, all title to the french monarchy; and the crown was to descend, after the death of the dauphin and the extinction of his heirs, by lineal order of affinity in the male line, to the duke of Berri, the house of Orleans, and successively to all the remaining branches of the Bourbon family. To prevent, as much as possible, the future union of the two kingdoms, Spain, on the extinction of

* The reader will perceive the difference between the denomination adopted in this place and that employed by the queen, in her speech during the whig administration, in which *the person* here designated called, without reserve, a *popish pretender*, &c.

Philip's line, was never to revert to any member of the house of Bourbon, but was to be entailed on such prince as should be designated in the treaty of peace. These arrangements were to be ratified in the most solemn manner, not only by France and Spain, but also by the guaranty of the powers engaged in the war. The queen spoke of this arrangement in a high strain of exultation. "The nature of this proposal is such, that it executes itself. The interest of Spain is to support it; and, in France, the persons to whom that succession is to belong, will be ready and powerful enough to vindicate their own right. France and Spain are now more effectually divided than ever. And thus, by the blessing of God, will a real balance of power be fixed in Europe, and remain liable to as few accidents, as human affairs can be exempted from."

Gibraltar and Minorca were to remain in the possession of England, together with commercial advantages in the trade to Spain and the Indies, including the assiento contract for thirty years. France also consented to the demolition of Dunkirk.

Her majesty then specified the arrangements made in favour of the allies, subject to the ultimate determination of the congress. The Rhine was to be the barrier of the empire; the protestant interest in Germany was to be established on the footing of the treaty of Westphalia. The Spanish Netherlands, Naples, Milan, and Sardinia, with the places on the coast of Tuscany, were to be transferred to the emperor, as chief of the house of Austria; for which purpose, the duke of Anjou had removed all

difficulties, by relinquishing his claim to the island. The possession of Sicily was reserved for future discussion.

The States were to be gratified in their own demands relative to commerce, with the exclusion of some few articles of merchandise, and with the entire barrier which they required in 1709 from France, with the exception of two or three places at most. The queen expressed her hope, that by the adoption of some expedients then in discussion, this barrier might be so settled, as to secure the republic from any aggression of France, which was the foundation of all her engagements on that head with the States.

The demands of Portugal were stated to be yet unsettled; those of Russia to admit of little difficulty; and those of Savoy to be nearly met by the offers of France, though she was exerting her influence to procure farther advantages for so useful an ally.

France, she added, had consented to acknowledge the actual rank of the elector palatine, and the electoral dignity in the house of Hanover, inserted in her demands, at that prince's desire.

She concluded with expressing her conviction that she should be able to secure the several interests of the other allies.

To the reader who conceives the impression made on the public mind, by a long series of unexampled successes, it would be needless to describe the feelings with which this speech was heard. Not merely the opposers of the government, but even some who, from principle, had supported

the ministry, and relied on their solemn declaration to the legislature, shrunk with shame and horror from the contemplation of a peace, which involved the sacrifice of public honour, and the dereliction of public principle. Three obvious mis-statements could not escape the most common observation. 1. That the main principle of the grand alliance was not the separation of the two kingdoms, but the exclusion of a Bourbon prince from the crown of Spain. 2. That no renunciation by Philip could invalidate his or his son's pretensions to the french crown; and, therefore, that no precautions could prevent the probability of a civil convulsion in France, or the renewal of war in Europe, should the infant dauphin die. 3. That these articles had been clandestinely arranged between England and France, without either the consent or participation of the allies.

These obvious defects, however, were overlooked in the house of commons, where the tory and jacobite influence was too powerful to be stemmed. An address was accordingly carried by acclamation, sanctioning the terms of peace already communicated in the speech, and expressing the fullest confidence in the wisdom and justice of the queen, to mature the future arrangements.

But notwithstanding the exertion of the prerogative, which had recently been made, to obtain a majority in the upper house, the peers in opposition made a vigorous stand. The arrangement relative to the protestant succession was the only article which was received with approbation: the other conditions underwent a scrutiny of the severest

kind, and the dishonourable transaction itself was stigmatised in the terms it deserved. It was by none more arraigned than by the duke of Marlborough himself, whose plans it had foiled; whose hopes it had frustrated, and whose victories it had rendered vain. In a strain of manly invective, he observed, with a foreboding which the event has justified: "The measures pursued in England for the last year, are directly contrary to her majesty's engagements with the allies, sully the triumphs and glories of her reign, and will render the english name odious to all other nations."

Lord Strafford attempted to retort, not by argument but by invective. He accused the duke of Marlborough of rendering the allies, particularly the dutch, backward in consenting to the peace, by maintaining with them a secret correspondence, and encouraging them to prolong the war, in the hope of deriving support from a strong party in this country. This captious accusation met with due reproof from lord Cowper, who observed, the noble lord had spent so much time abroad, that he had almost forgotten, not only the language, but the constitution of his country. "It was a new crime," he added, "to be charged with holding a correspondence with allies, whose interest the queen had declared to be inseparable from her own; whereas, it was difficult to reconcile, either with our own laws or with the laws of honour and justice, the conduct of those who had treated clandestinely with the common enemy, without the participation of our allies."

After exceptions made to some parts of the pro-

posed address of thanks, Nottingham and Cowper, with great energy, supported the introduction of a clause, requesting her majesty to take such measures with her allies, as might induce them to join in a mutual guaranty of the protestant succession; but this clause being ably opposed by Oxford and Poulett, was rejected by a large majority. The original address was then carried, by 81 voices against 36.

The whigs and their tory allies were not, however, discouraged; but repeated and embodied all their objections to the preliminaries in a protest of peculiar energy and argument, which was signed by 24 peers, among whom we again find the names of Marlborough and Godolphin. The freedom, boldness, and truth of this protest, irritated the ministerial party; and, as in the former instance, they voted its erasure from the Journals. Notwithstanding all the threats of parliamentary punishment, and the precautions of the government, this important document could not be suppressed, but was circulated in print throughout the country. Rewards were in vain offered, and penalties denounced against the printers and publishers; but no discovery was ever made.

This was the last effort of the whigs to awaken the nation to a sense of its honour and interest. The parliament was soon after prorogued; and here terminated the political career of Marlborough, during the remaining years of the reign of queen Anne.

The sanction of parliament to the offers of Louis, confirmed the resolution of the queen to execute

the clandestine agreement with France, for a cessation of hostilities, and to accomplish her promise of ordering the british troops, as well as the auxiliaries in her pay, to withdraw from the confederate army, on the delivery of Dunkirk, should the other allies refuse to imitate her example.

With this view, the british plenipotentiary at Utrecht proposed to those of the emperor, the States, and the other members of the confederacy, to accept the conditions offered by France, and to concur with England in consenting to an armistice. But the proposal was either peremptorily rejected or evaded, until reference was made to their respective principals. Deputies were sent from the Hague, with orders that the dutch troops should not agree to the armistice, until they received explicit instructions. This disappointment, however, did not alter the resolution of the english cabinet; and special directions were transmitted to the duke of Ormond, to cease from assisting in the operations of the campaign. As soon as he received the requisite information from Torcy, that the king of France had signed the articles of agreement, he was instructed to take a proper occasion of acquainting Eugene and the deputies, with his orders to publish a suspension of arms for two months, in virtue of the conditions settled with France, and the consent to deliver Dunkirk as a pledge of her sincerity.

While he was hesitating to communicate these dishonourable instructions, he was involved in a new dilemma, by a message from Villars*, request-

* Mem. de Villars, vol. ii. p. 207.

ing to be informed, whether the troops of England were employed in the siege of Quesnoy? Having replied in the negative, Villars imperiously required a farther explanation, whether the troops under his orders would oppose any attempt of the french to relieve the place, supposing Eugene should continue the siege? his sovereign having been assured that the british troops, and the auxiliaries in british pay, were not to act directly or indirectly against his army. In consequence of this categorical demand, Ormond did not hesitate to conform to the instructions which he had received from the secretary.

He apprised prince Eugene of his orders, and then addressing himself to the generals of the auxiliaries in british pay, acquainted them that a suspension of arms had been concluded for two months, between England and France, and required them to conform to this arrangement. He added, that the queen would consider herself as acquitted from all obligation to liquidate the arrears of subsidies, due to any prince whose troops should refuse to obey his orders. A similar communication was made to the dutch deputies, with an intimation that the british troops and their auxiliaries would separate from the confederate army, if they withheld their assent.

After many remonstrances on the part of the other generals, Ormond was persuaded to defer the promulgation of the armistice for three days. On the expiration of that term, he prepared to march towards Dunkirk; but he had the mortification to find, that neither promises nor threats could induce

the generals and auxiliaries under their command, to follow so shameful an example. The hereditary prince of Hesse Cassel, who spake the language of all, bade the duke's adjutant to tell his general, that "the hessians would gladly march if it were to fight the french;" and another commander said, "We do not serve for pay, but for fame."

On the 16th of July, Ormond, with the british troops, amounting to 12,000 men, separated from the confederate army, by quitting his camp of Cambresis. He was accompanied only by four squadrons and one battalion of the Holstein subsidiaries, and a regiment of dragoons from the contingent of Liege. The march of the troops presented a spectacle no less melancholy than imposing. As they had so often fought under the same banners, and so often emulated each other in the career of victory, this inglorious separation conveyed a pang to the bosom of the meanest soldier. To borrow the unadorned language of serjeant Milner, "As they marched off that day, both sides looked very dejectfully on each other, neither being permitted to speak to the other, to prevent reflections that might thereby arise, being there was then made a strange revolution between us and our allies, by our cessation of arms, or entrance on an odd peace with France." *

Nor were these precautions unnecessary, for the threat of withholding the arrears of the auxiliaries had roused them to such a pitch of fury, that fears were entertained, lest they should seize the person

* Milner, p. 356.

of the british general, and prevent the retreat of his troops, as a pledge for the liquidation.

In the midst of this mortification, Ormond relied on the grateful fidelity of his own countrymen, for delivering them from the hardships of war; but great was his disappointment, when, at the close of his first march, the suspension of arms was proclaimed at the head of each regiment. A burst of indignation and abhorrence accompanied this proof of national dishonour. Instead of huzzas and acclamations, he heard nothing but a "general hiss and murmur throughout the camp." To adopt the words of a contemporary historian, "The british soldiers were so enraged at this unworthy conduct, that they were observed tearing their hair, and rending their clothes, with furious exclamations and execrable curses against the duke of Ormond, as a stupid tool, and general of straw. The colonels, captains, and other brave officers, were so overwhelmed with vexation, that they sat apart in their tents, looking on the ground through very shame, with downcast eyes; and for several days shrunk from the sight even of their fellow soldiers. For it grieved them to the heart, to submit to the disgrace of laying down their arms after so many splendid victories. Some left their colours to serve among the allies, and others afterwards withdrew; and whenever they recollected the duke of Marlborough, and the late glorious times, their eyes flowed with tears." *

Accompanied thus by marks of public detestation,

* Cunningham, vol. ii. p. 432.

Ormond continued his march; but the treachery which the british cabinet had practised towards the allies, nearly recoiled on themselves. At Bouchain, Tournay, and Douay, the dutch governors refused to open their gates, for the passage of the retrograding army; and, at the same moment, the king of France, profiting by the inability of the british commander to prevail over the auxiliary troops, declared that after such a breach of promise, he could not relinquish the possession of Dunkirk. Without shelter or support, dreading the resentment of the confederates, distrustful of the enemy, and unable even to rely on his own troops, Ormond had no other resource to secure his retreat, than by seizing Ghent and Bruges, and soliciting the direction of his own government.

In the first moment of success, the british ministry had exulted in the disappointment of the confederates; they boasted that their royal mistress, instead of receiving, was giving the law, and carried the fate of Europe in her hands, obliging France to enter into engagements, and give pledges to her, who was herself under none to France.* But this unexpected dilemma soon reduced them to a more humble tone. They reproached the french monarch with a violation of faith, appealed to his gratitude, and endeavoured to work on his apprehensions, by expatiating on the consequences which might ensue, from a revulsion of the public sentiment. Fortunately, a sense of his own weakness, and a prospect of the evils attendant on an

* Bolingbroke's Correspondence, vol. ii. p. 378.

unsettled succession, prevailed more powerfully with Louis, than the expostulations of those whom he had learnt to despise. He affected to yield to their remonstrances, and delivered up Dunkirk to a body of troops detached from the coast of England. By this cession, the position of Ormond was secured, and he remained in his post, waiting the issue of the pending negotiation.

The cession of Dunkirk, however, did not completely restore harmony between the cabinets of England and France. Warm disputes arising in the complicated negotiations, Louis was encouraged by the increasing divisions between England and the other allies, to resume his haughty tone; and it was to be apprehended that the renewal of the armistice would encounter much difficulty. In vain the british plenipotentiaries continued to press the dutch and the other allies to accede to the cessation of hostilities, and admit a minister from Philip to the congress. As they persevered in the prosecution of the war, the british cabinet had no alternative but to sue France to moderate her pretensions. With this view, secretary St. John, who had been recently created viscount Bolingbroke, was sent *incognito* to the court of Versailles, and was accompanied in his mission by Gualtier and Prior, the original agents of the clandestine intercourse. The secretary accomplished the objects of his mission with great address; and, as Louis dreaded even the remotest chance of a new revolution of parties in England, he consented to compromise the disputed points. He agreed that Sicily should be ceded to the duke of Savoy, and

Bolingbroke acquiesced in the restoration of the elector of Bavaria. The time and mode for the renunciation of the crowns of France and Spain were also settled; several minor points mutually adjusted; and the suspension of arms between the two kingdoms prolonged for four months.

After a stay of only a few days, Bolingbroke returned, exulting that his mission had removed the mutual embarrassments of the two governments. Prior remained at Paris, as *chargé d'affaires*, and being soon after joined by the duke of Shrewsbury, in the quality of ambassador, the most sanguine hopes were entertained, that through their intervention, the negotiation would be brought to a successful issue.

The formal secession of England from the grand alliance, damped the spirit, and dissolved the union of the confederates. The surrender of Quesnoy, which took place on the very day of Ormond's retreat, was the last triumph of this hitherto glorious contest; for although Eugene was still at the head of an army not inferior to the enemy, the example of defection spread distrust and alarm. With mingled sentiments of desperation and chagrin, he hastened to invest Landrecies, and seems to have forgotten his usual caution, by not calculating on the reinforcements which his antagonist was enabled to draw from the garrisons now relieved from danger, by the declaration of the armistice.

With this accession of strength, Villars conducted his movements with consummate skill, and over-

whelmed the allied forces. He surprised a corps of 8000 men, under the earl of Albemarle, encamped at Denain, for the purpose of facilitating the passage of convoys to the besieging army before Landrecies. Having forced their intrenchments, he killed, captured, or dispersed seventeen battalions; and among the prisoners were, besides the earl of Albemarle, four lieutenant-generals, five colonels, and no less than 300 other officers. He seized also a great quantity of ammunition and provisions, and made a considerable booty. What rendered this defeat more unfortunate and disgraceful was, that it was witnessed by Eugene himself, who advancing rapidly on the other side of the Scheld, to the relief of Albemarle, was prevented from passing, by the destruction of the bridge communicating with Denain.

In consequence of this disaster, the siege was raised, and the french marshal continued, with little interruption, his career of success. Having recovered the small posts of Mortaigne, St. Amand, and Marchiennes, he invested Douay; and, after a fruitless attempt of Eugene to relieve it, reduced him to the mortification of witnessing its surrender. Quesnoy shared the same fate; and this disastrous campaign, which was expected to have been distinguished by the invasion of France, and the signature of peace under the walls of Paris, was fatally closed on the 10th of October, by the loss of Bouchain; the last great conquest which had swelled the triumphs of the hero of Blenheim. The only compensation for these losses in the

Netherlands, was the petty capture of fort Knoque. *

It is needless to detail the military operations in the other parts of the theatre of war; because the defection of England rendered all the exertions of the confederates equally languid and useless.

On the Rhine and in Italy, the allied forces awaited in suspense the result of the campaign in Flanders, and the progress of the pending negotiations. In Germany, the operations of the imperial general, the duke of Wirtemberg, terminated in a fruitless attempt to force the lines of Weissemburg; his antagonist, marshal d'Harcourt, satisfied with the repulse, made no offensive movement, and, in the month of November, the two armies retired into winter quarters.

On the side of Italy, notwithstanding the early efforts of the germans to give effect to the operations of the campaign, by the capture of Porto-Ercole, their success was followed by no important consequences. The duke of Savoy was lured by the secret offer of England, to secure to him the possession of Sicily; and, though he declined acceding to the armistice when it was first proposed, he observed a cautious line of conduct, and remained on the defensive. Marshal Berwick, on the other hand, was too prudent to disturb the pacific disposition of a prince, who was evidently wavering between his interest and love of glory. At the close of the campaign, Victor Amadeus

* Accounts in the Gazettes; — Vie du Prince Eugene; — Memoires de Villars; — Narratives of the campaign in the History of Europe; — Boyer's Reign of Queen Anne; — Brodrick; &c. &c.

recalled his troops into Piémont; and, relying on the kind intentions of the queen in his favour, accepted the armistice, and thus terminated * his co-operation with the court of Vienna.

In the peninsula the same causes produced the same effects. At the ratification of the general armistice, the remnant of the english troops embarked at Barcelona, amidst the murmurs and execrations of the catalans; and count Staremberg, deprived of his brave auxiliaries, passed the campaign in the unsuccessful siege of Gerona, which was protracted to the unusual term of nine months. Philip, conscious that he should reap more advantage from the negotiations than from active hostilities, waited in confident security the termination of that treaty, which was to preserve to him Spain and the Indies, without farther effusion of blood. † On the side of Portugal, the campaign was equally abortive, as the king was preparing to accede to the suspension of arms.

Marlborough viewed with an anxious eye the disastrous events of the war, and the no less fatal tendency of the public negotiations at Utrecht, as well as of the clandestine intercourse with that enemy, whom it had been the great object of his military career to reduce. The gloom of these forebodings was increased by a melancholy event, the death of lord Godolphin, which deeply affected his feelings, and revived in his memory the splendid achievements of that glorious administration, in which he and his colleague had taken so promi-

* Muratori, Annali d'Italia, anno 1712;—Targe, tom. vi. chap. 5.
† St. Philippe;—Memoirs of the Kings of Spain, chap. 21.

nent a share, associates in glory, and now companions in disgrace.

This great and upright statesman, after a long and excruciating illness, terminated his days in the house of the duke at St. Alban's, giving a memorable example of disinterestedness and integrity in office, which shone clearer after the ordeal of persecution and vengeance he had undergone.

By an indorsement on the queen's letter of dismission, the duchess observes, that what he left behind him scarcely sufficed for the expences of his funeral; and records as a singular circumstance, that several government and other securities were found by his executors to the amount of about £14,000, which belonged to her and some other friends and dependants, whose money he kindly put out to interest. * The title and scanty fortune of the veteran statesman devolved on his son Francis, who had given a new lustre to his house by his marriage with Henrietta, eldest daughter of the duke of Marlborough.

This melancholy event tended to confirm Marlborough in the resolution he had formed, of

* " Had not his elder brother happened to die, he had been in very low circumstances after having been in several reigns more than twenty years, though he was a man that never made any great expences, for he won at play, and mortally hated all kinds of show and grandeur, but he was very charitable, and generous; and though he had lived so long and had great employments when he died, he had not in the world but about fouteen thousand pounds in tallies, of which sum seven was mine, three Mrs. Randue's, a thousand Mrs. Curtis's, a woman that looked after my two elder children, and many other small sums that he took of helpless people who thought themselves safe in his hands; and when all his debts were paid there could hardly be enough to bury him."

Indorsement of the duchess to the letter written by the queen when she dismissed lord Godolphin.

retiring from his ungrateful country, which he had only suspended from his unwillingness to quit a friend, who was labouring under the severest sufferings of bodily illness. Many circumstances, indeed, concurred in inducing him to tear himself from his family and connections, at the advanced age of sixty-two, when he began to feel the increasing infirmities incident to the decline of life. His strenuous opposition to the measures of government, and particularly to the terms of the projected treaty, could not fail to increase the animosity of the queen, and draw on him the vengeance of an offended party. He was aware that he would not be suffered to enjoy that tranquillity which his age and infirmities rendered necessary. He was convinced that a house of commons, a ministry, and a sovereign, who had already construed his former services into crimes, would pursue him with additional acrimony, and be contented with nothing less than his ruin. He, therefore, could no longer hesitate on securing that asylum abroad, which was denied to him in his native land.

Many idle conjectures have been advanced, and many ridiculous stories propagated, relative to the causes and circumstances of his voluntary exile. Instead, however, of entering into a frivolous and unsatisfactory inquiry on the subject, we shall briefly relate those facts which we have traced from indisputable documents.

If during the session of parliament, when the ministry were scarcely established in their employments, neither a sense of national gratitude, nor a consciousness of their own dignity, could screen

Marlborough from malicious invectives and personal insults, even in the house of peers; we may judge of the torrent of obloquy to which he was exposed, at the close of the session, when a triumphant majority had borne the government through every difficulty, and silenced all opposition. Every agent of political intrigue was then employed; every malignant passion roused; every mercenary underling of the press encouraged, by the largesses and example of Oxford and Bolingbroke to throw odium on the general and statesman who had saved the country. Every previous act of his life was brought in review, and perverted to his dishonour; the irregularities of his early youth in the corrupt court of Charles the second, were blazoned in the most hateful colours; the scurrilous pen which produced the New Atalantis, was stimulated and rewarded; even his domestic retirement was violated; and the harmless enjoyments of social life, as well as the attentions of friendship and intimacy, were construed into political intrigues, or stigmatised as crimes. The annals and periodical papers of the times abound with narratives and satirical allusions, which it would now be indecorous even to repeat, and which cannot be perused without horror and disgust.

While these misrepresentations were producing their effect, the ministry were not idle in pushing those prosecutions, which had been instituted against him in his public capacity. The first of these was, the suit for the recovery of £15,000 a year derived from the contribution of 2½ per cent., which was brought forward in the court of Queen's bench. The manner in which this pro-

cess was conducted, evidently proved that his plea of justification would be disallowed, and that he could not expect that equity to which the meanest of his fellow-subjects was entitled.

The other suit was still more galling to his feelings, still more unjust in itself, and still more dishonourable to the nation.

We have already perceived from the letters, which passed between Marlborough and Oxford, that four commissioners had been appointed to examine the accounts relative to the building of Blenheim; but notwithstanding the promises of the treasurer to obtain warrants from the queen, and to expedite the completion of the structure, considerable arrears were due to the workmen, and large sums were claimed, by those who had advanced loans for the same purpose, amounting in the whole to £30,000.

Although both the duke and duchess of Marlborough refused to pay the workmen, or guaranty the loans, and justly considered it as the concern of government, in conformity with the promise of the queen, formally recorded in the acts of parliament; yet no money was issued, excepting a small advance in 1711, barely adequate to the expence of covering in the works. The building was accordingly suspended, and the workmen and other creditors were encouraged to sue the duke for the liquidation of their claims. This suit was another instance of unrelenting persecution, as well as a forfeiture of national honour; but there was little doubt that, if brought into the exchequer, it would be decided against him.

Having therefore the design of withdrawing from England, he applied to the treasurer, through the medium of Mr. Maynwaring. * Oxford received this application with a degree of attention, which marks his gratitude for past favours, and a due sense of the consideration to which the duke of Marlborough was entitled. On this occasion, we find two of his letters which plainly prove that he obtained the passport, notwithstanding considerable opposition from some other members of the cabinet.

"*October* 30. — Sir; I received the favour of yours, and will be ready to meet the gentleman any time he thinks good; but I believe it will be difficult to do it this week; any day the next he will please to appoint. I beg you will make my compliments. I am, with great truth, Sir, your most humble and obedient servant. Oxford."

"*October* 31. — Sir; I desire you will, with my most humble service, assure our friend, that there have been endeavours from both sides to obstruct granting the pass desired, yet I shall have the honour to put it into his hands. I did not think it worth while to trouble you with the obstruction one meets with; for when I undertook it, I was resolved not to be deterred from finishing it. I am, with great sincerity," &c.

We shall not attempt to detail any farther circumstances of this mysterious transaction, which

* This was the last act of devotion and friendship which Maynwaring was enabled to manifest towards his noble patron; for, soon afterwards, he fell a victim to a fluxion caused by walking late in the gardens of St. Alban's, where he was on a visit to the duchess.

we have no clue to unravel, but merely observe, that it received the entire approbation of the queen: for, in a conversation with the duchess of Hamilton, she said, "The duke of Marlborough has acted wisely in going abroad." *

The terms of the passport have given rise to no less variety of conjectures than the mode in which it was obtained. Some have confidently asserted, that the residence of the duke was limited to a certain place or places; others, that he was furnished with a general letter of recommendation from the queen. To these idle suppositions, the contents of the instrument itself will be the best answer.

The pass permits his grace the duke of Marlborough to go into foreign parts, whithersoever he may think fit, together with his suite, and recommends him to the good offices of all kings, princes, republics, and her majesty's allies, as well as to commanders, &c. her own subjects; allows to go freely and commodiously wherever his need requires; and states that such good offices shall be acknowledged and returned, when opportunity serves.

Dated Windsor Castle, 30th October, 1712, and countersigned Bolingbroke. †

His retinue, as enumerated in the pass, consisted of two gentlemen; three valets de chambre; one

* Lord Cowper's Diary.

† Bolingbroke having, as secretary of state, officially signed the pass, some writers have erroneously stated that it was obtained through his influence. The letter of Oxford sufficiently contradicts this assertion; and the secretary, as the author of the Life of Maynwaring observes, vol. iii. was one of the persons who opposed the grant of it.

cook; three footmen; coachman; postillion; helper; two grooms.

With this permission, the duke was preparing for his departure, when a melancholy catastrophe occurred, which afforded his enemies a new subject for calumny.

The duke of Hamilton, who had been appointed ambassador to France, and was in high favour with the queen and ministry, had been engaged in a private quarrel with lord Mohun. The consequence was a duel, in which the latter was killed on the spot, and his antagonist soon afterwards expired.

As this peer had taken so prominent a part in the recent quarrel with lord Poulett, and as general Macartney, his second, was a devoted partisan of Marlborough, it was represented as political, and malignantly attributed to the instigation of the disgraced commander, who was accused by the Examiner of setting the example of party duels, and making lord Mohun the bully of his faction.

Marlborough was now more anxious to hasten his departure from a country, where he was exposed to such cruel detraction.

CHAPTER 110.

1712—1713.

Arrival of Marlborough at Ostend. — Progress through Antwerp and Maestricht, to Aix-la-Chapelle. — His distinguished reception by persons of all ranks. — Temporary stay at Aix-la-Chapelle. — Joined by the duchess at Maestricht. — Residence at Frankfort on the Mayne. — Visit to Mindelheim. — Assailed by new charges from the commissioners of accounts. — His vindication. — Continuation of the negotiations with France. — Remarks on the peace of Utrecht. — Removal of Marlborough to Antwerp. — Campaign on the Rhine. — Reverses of the imperial arms. — Negotiations at Radstadt between France, the emperor, and the empire. — Terms of pacification. — The emperor notifies to Marlborough the restoration of Mindelheim to the elector of Bavaria, and confirms him in the title of prince of the Roman empire. — Claims of Marlborough for an indemnification. — Letters of prince Eugene. — No indemnification granted.

Before his departure, the duke of Marlborough vested his estates in the hands of his sons in law, as trustees. He also consigned £50,000 to the care of his friend Cadogan, to be lodged in the dutch funds, in order to supply them, as the duchess observes, with the means of subsistence, should the stuart line be restored.

After taking an affectionate leave of his family and wife, who continued in England to settle his

affairs, he repaired to Dover, where he arrived on the 24th of November. The wind being contrary, he remained at the neighbouring seat of his friend, Sir Henry Furnese, till the Sunday following, the 28th, when he embarked in the North Briton packet, as a private passenger, without receiving any other honour than the voluntary salute of the captain of the vessel. But this neglect of his country was amply compensated by the cordial reception which he experienced on reaching the continent.

At his entrance into the harbour of Ostend, a salute of artillery from the town, forts, and shipping, welcomed his arrival. The garrison was under arms; and he was conducted by the governor and general Cadogan, through a vast concourse of people, to the house of captain Brown, where he was sumptuously entertained, and at the same time gratified with an account of the capture of fort Knoque; a success which, however trifling, awakened his patriotic feelings. On the following morning he departed under a triple discharge of artillery; and, on approaching Antwerp, was met without the walls by the governor, the marquis of Terracina, whom he recognised with pleasure, as having delivered up the citadel, and joined the cause of the allies, after the splendid day of Ramilies. In the name of his imperial master, the marquis offered his noble guest all the honours usually paid to sovereigns, which the duke declined; but could not prevent the discharge of the artillery, or suppress the acclamations of the people, on beholding the great general who had delivered

them from the yoke of France. After accepting a collation, he proceeded towards Maestricht, hoping to pass unheeded, by deviating into the most private roads; but all his endeavours to seclude himself from observation were unavailing; for parties of horse paraded the country between Antwerp and Maestricht, to offer their attendance; and, on entering the town, at seven in the evening, he found the whole garrison drawn up under arms, from the gate to the house of the governor. Here he alighted amidst repeated salutations from the bulwarks; a guard of honour distinguished his residence; and, on the ensuing morning, he was complimented by the magistrates, in a full body, and with as great tokens of respect as if he still retained the command of the confederate army. Nor were less honours paid to him on his departure from the territories of the States General; for, on his journey to Aix-la-Chapelle, persons of all ranks and nations flocked to hail the preserver of the empire, bestowing their blessings on him as their great deliverer. They were struck with his noble demeanour, and testified their admiration, by declaring that his looks, his air, and his address, were no less conquering than his sword. Many mingled exclamations of pity with their cheering huzzas; many burst into tears, exclaiming that they deemed it a greater honour to be born in Lapland than in England, and that no nation ever fell so unaccountably from such a height of glory and esteem, into such contempt and degradation. "In a word," to use the animated expressions of his earliest biographer, "all ages and sexes both adored and

bewailed him, whilst the duke himself shewed that the greatness of his sufferings was only to be surmounted by the greatness of his courage, and went through the town of Aix-la-Chapelle to the house that was prepared for his reception, in such a manner, as if he bore at heart the pressure of other people's misfortunes, not the remembrance of his own. The next day his levee was crowded by all persons of rank and distinction in the town, who, though of different interests and nations, were unanimous in their respect for his great merits. In particular, the duke de Lesdiguières, speaking of him at his return, observed to the abbot de Guilestre, 'I can now say that I have seen the man, who is equal to the marshal de Turenne in conduct, to the prince of Condé in courage, and superior to the marshal de Luxembourg in success.'" *

Arriving at Aix-la-Chapelle, he seems to have been disappointed by a delay in the departure of the duchess from England; and expresses his regret in an affectionate letter, dated Jan. 18.

"I writ to you by the last post, to inform you that the port of Ostend is never shut by the frost, and that of the Brill very rarely; but, by the printed papers, I see you have no thoughts of leaving England till the middle of this month, old style; so that I am afraid this may still find you at London, which I am sorry for. For besides the impatience I am in of having you with me, this frosty weather makes the sea calm, and the roads

* Life of Marlborough, p. 173.

as good as in summer; so that I could have wished we might have got to Frankfort before the thaw, of which I now despair. But you may be sure that when I have the happiness of your company, nothing shall be neglected to make your journey easy."

He continued some time *incognito* at Aix-la-Chapelle, where he was peculiarly careful in withdrawing, as much as possible, from public observation, and in giving no cause for that jealousy, with which his numerous enemies watched his conduct. In this situation he received the condolence and friendly counsel of Eugene, whose affection was superior to any change of circumstances, notwithstanding his imperial master cautiously abstained from any direct communication with the noble exile.

"*Vienna, Jan. 25.* — Sir; I received only four days ago the letter your highness did me the honour to write to me the 17th of December, by the baron de Fessel. I wished much to take leave of you before my departure from Holland; but I was in a state of anxiety till I was apprised that you were on this side of the water, knowing the people with whom you have to deal. I did not fail to shew your letter to his imperial majesty, when I gave him that which you addressed to him. He does not reply to it for want of a safe conveyance; but he has ordered me to assure you of his esteem and friendship, and to say, that he will lose no opportunity to give you proofs of them. He begs you to communicate the same thing to the person who has written to him, and the reasons

why he does not answer. I think your highness will do well to remain as long as possible at Aix-la-Chapelle, without causing suspicion; for I know you are watched. Nothing can be more just than the thoughts of your highness, touching affairs in general, and those of England in particular. You know his imperial majesty alone has held firm hitherto, making every possible effort, and having even persuaded the empire to do the same; but this cannot last; and if the dutch and the other allies, through fear or bad government, will ruin themselves, and Europe with them, it cannot be prevented. They will be the first. What I can assure your highness is, that his imperial majesty will forget nothing that depends on him, to remedy the bad state of affairs, if opportunity offers, although the conduct of the allies gives him cause to fear embarking himself with them.

"He commands me to make this known to your highness, that you may have no cause of fear relative to your letter."

After lingering some time at Aix-la-Chapelle, in constant expectation of his wife's arrival, he quitted that city, from a suspicion of a conspiracy to seize his person*, and returned to Maestricht, from whence he thus affectionately writes: —

To the Duchess.

"*Maestricht, Feb. 5.*—If you have observed by my letters that I thought you would have left England sooner than you have been able to do, I

* Boyer's Political State.

hope you will be so kind and just to me, to impute it to the great desire I had of having the satisfaction of your company. For I am extremely sensible of the obligation I have to you, for the resolution you have taken of leaving your friends and country for my sake. I am very sure, if there be any thing in my power that may make it easy to you, I should do it with all imaginable pleasure. In this place you will have little conveniences; so that we must get to Frankfort as soon as we can. I wish we may be better there; but I fear you will not be easy till we get to some place, where we may settle for some time; so that we may be in a method, and orderly way of living; and if you are then contented, I shall have nothing to trouble me.

"When you go to Brussels, I desire you would give yourself the trouble of going to see the hangings at M. de Vost's; you may do it in half an hour, whilst they get the dinner ready. Cadogan has promised to send me an express, as soon as you land, by which you may give me the pleasure of two lines. I am ever yours. M."

He had soon the satisfaction of being joined by his partner in exile; and, after a short stay, conveyed her to Frankfort on the Maine, where he resided several months. In May he made an excursion to his principality of Mindelheim, where he was received by the inhabitants with the honours due to him as sovereign, and as a prince of the holy empire.

On his return, he had the mortification to receive intelligence from England, that the commis-

sioners appointed by the commons to examine and state the debts due to the army, had reported some farther charges against him. They had accused him of "directing the deputy commissary to muster the troops as complete, when defective, for which he received a pistole per troop, and ten shillings per company, as a gratuity or perquisite on every muster from the subject-troops; although he never mustered the foreigners, except some corps, without having any treaty or establishment for his guide." *

Without a moment's delay, he drew up a manly refutation of these malicious charges, and sent it to one of the peers †, for the purpose of being submitted to the upper house. At the same time, he transmitted a duplicate to Mr. Craggs, to be laid before the commons.

"My lord; *Frankfort, June* 2.

"I was extremely surprised to find myself charged with mismanagement of the public money in the report of the commissioners of accounts, on pretence of the subject-troops having been mustered complete during the war, and the foreigners not being mustered at all. It is easy to misrepresent the best things, and give the greatest falsehoods an air of truth, by suppressing of circumstances; by relating facts by halves; by reporting only parts of answers; by confounding of times, and drawing conclusions from innuendos and suppositions, which I shall demonstrate to be the

* Boyer's Queen Anne, p. 630; — Journals.

† This letter is without address, but was probably written to the lord treasurer Oxford.

manner I am treated on this occasion. I am charged first with the want of authority for passing the troops complete; and it is insinuated, in the next place, that the doing it was a detriment and prejudice to the public. As to the want of authority, this objection is, in fact, false; for the late high treasurer, lord Godolphin, and myself, were empowered by parliament to take off respites, to pass musters complete, and to act as we should find most for her majesty's service in those matters; as appears by a clause in an act of parliament, passed in the year 1702 or 1703, of which Mr. Cardonel can give an exact and particular account: and I appeal to the testimony of my lord Bolingbroke, who was then secretary of war, for a confirmation of what I allege in this affair. As to the pretending it has increased the public expence, the contrary is so manifestly known, that had the commissioners examined any one officer of the army on that point, or taken the trouble to compute how little the non-effective money amounted to, and how much the recruits cost, it would have appeared as plain as a mathematical demonstration, that very great sums had been saved to the public by this way of recruiting. I am certain no officer will refuse to attest on oath, that this fund was seldom or ever sufficient to complete their companies; and I appeal to all those who sit in the house, whether my obliging the captains to recruit out of the non-effective money, was not complained of as a hardship on them, since they were very often forced to apply part of their personal pay to complete their companies; for which reason,

frequent applications were made to me by all the general officers of the foot, to obtain some consideration for the captains, on account of this extraordinary expence. I, however, always withstood it, to prevent increasing the charge of the army in Flanders, which would have been the unavoidable consequence of giving any thing like recruit-money by parliament. That the public has gained very considerably by the method I put this matter in, is a truth, not only proved by facts, and witnessed by all the officers in the army, but of a nature, that it carries self-evidence along with it; for upon reckoning the recruits to cost four or five pounds a man, and the vacancy from whence that sum is to arise at sixpence a day, and considering the regiments came complete into the field, and that several of the men died, and were killed at the latter end of the campaign, it will appear that the fund of non-effective money was not sufficient for the recruiting, and the captains, consequently, under a necessity of supplying what was wanting out of their personal pay; for a particular state of which, I refer to any one colonel it may be thought fit to examine. As for any directions that might have been given Mr. Marshal, the deputy commissary, concerning the musters, I am certain they are exactly conformable to the power vested in me for that end by parliament, which may be verified by Mr. Cardonel's book of entries. Concerning their second charge, of the foreigners not being mustered, it is as groundless as if they had said those troops had never been in the field, or ever existed but in imagination. Since the commissary

Marshal, who mustered them, is at London, and the rolls by which they were paid, are in the commissary general's office; besides that, the musters were usually made in the presence of the rest of the army, so I think it is unnecessary to say any thing more to disprove this fact, however positively asserted. I shall only take notice that these foreign troops were in the joint pay of England and Holland, and always reviewed at the beginning of the campaign, by the dutch deputies and myself; and as the States paid half those troops, it is a contradiction to imagine, that out of complaisance to any body, they would have passed them complete, had they not been really so. For the insinuation of two and a half per cent. being given for not mustering the said troops, it is not only a reflection on me, as malicious as 'tis false, but is likewise so on all those kings and princes who furnished these troops, since they consequently must be thought parties in this supposed fraud. As for the allowing the strangers their extraordinaries, according to M. Slingelandt's certificates, it was done on account of the very great exactness and severity the States General proceeded with in these matters; they requiring all officers concerned in them to take oaths that, by the strictness of the treaties, they were not obliged to. By this means, we had the benefit of their extraordinary good husbandry, without drawing on clamour or any application to her majesty, from the princes to whom those troops belonged; notwithstanding which, I always appointed Mr. Cardonel, or some other person duly qualified, to

make the necessary enquiries into these things; and upon their report, and my own observation, found a better method could not be established than following the example of the States, for which, M. Slingelandt's certificates were the best guide. Though I have a great deal more to offer on this subject; yet I think what I have already said, is not only sufficient to clear me from the aspersions the commissioners have vouchsafed in their great goodness to throw on me, but also to be thought, by all impartial persons, to have deserved thanks, instead of the return I meet with. As these representations have been laid before both houses, it is necessary my justification should be so too. I must, therefore, desire you to take a proper occasion of satisfying their lordships how groundless these reflections are. I am too much persuaded of their justice to doubt of their doing me all the right I can desire. I am ever yours.

"MARLBOROUGH."

This able reply silenced the charges of the commissioners; and, from this time, the public were no longer deluded and insulted by their malicious and ungrounded accusations.

The private griefs of our illustrious exile, were, however, soon absorbed in his public regrets for the dishonour of England, which was consummated in the peace of Utrecht. Notwithstanding the boasted embassy of Bolingbroke, and the sanguine expectations which were entertained, that the differences between the two crowns were finally adjusted, new sources of controversy arose, from the chicanes of the french cabinet, which Swift

softly denominates *refined mistakes* in their policy. The cession of Sicily to the duke of Savoy, though conceded by Louis, was now strenuously resisted. The commercial arrangements, promised in favour of England, were retracted, and the french ministry had even the effrontery to require, that if Holland would not accept the proffered conditions of peace, England should join France in extorting their consent by force of arms.

It was now that the new ministers recognised the errors which they had blindly committed, and felt the heavy responsibility they had wantonly incurred. The shameful tergiversation of the french cabinet extorted a reluctant reproach of ill faith from Bolingbroke; and, with a mixture of vexation and irony, he denounced to Torcy the mischief his sovereign was drawing on himself, by his delusion of those who had confided in his integrity.

To Prior he observes, "I have exhausted all my stock of argument, in the long letter which, by the queen's order, I wrote to the duke of Shrewsbury. To you I shall only add, that we stand indeed on the brink of a precipice; but the french stand there too. Pray tell M. de Torcy from me, that he may get Robin and Harry hanged*, but affairs will soon run back into so much confusion, that he will wish us alive again. To speak seriously, unless the queen can talk of her interest as determined with France, and unless your court will keep our allies in the wrong, as

* Meaning himself and lord Oxford.

they are sufficiently at this time, I foresee inextricable difficulties." He concludes with observing, "M. de Torcy has a confidence in you. Make use of it once for all on this occasion, and convince him thoroughly, that we must give a different turn to our parliament and people, according to their resolution at this crisis." *

The queen was even under the necessity of aiding the private instances of her ministers, by an official threat of the resumption of hostilities; for the duke of Shrewsbury was at the same time charged to declare, "that she had farther prorogued her parliament to the third of March, in hopes to assure them by that time of her peace being agreed on; for should the two houses meet while any uncertainty remained, supplies must be asked as for a war." †

Louis at length found that he had pushed the servility of his friends to the utmost, and, therefore, announced his tardy acquiescence in the terms, which he had so long and repeatedly expressed his readiness to accept. The british plenipotentiaries were accordingly authorised to sign a separate treaty of peace; and the dutch, the duke of Savoy, and the kings of Prussia and Portugal were, by lures, promises, and threats, induced to follow the example. The emperor, however, with more spirit than prudence, indignantly refused to submit to the dictation either of his friends or enemies; and

* January 19. 1712-1713; — Bolingbroke's Correspondence, vol. iii. p. 298.

† Swift's Four last Years of Queen Anne; — Works, vol. xvii. p. 335.

being supported by the princes of the empire, prepared for the prosecution of the war.

We shall not sully our pages with a more specific account of the negotiation, or the terms of that treaty, which one of our great statesmen justly calls the indelible reproach of the * age. Suffice it to observe, that all the articles of the grand alliance, which related to the security of Europe, or the welfare of England, the great objects of this just and successful war, were either violated or abandoned. A prince of the house of Bourbon was suffered to retain Spain and the Indies; Sicily was separated from the kingdom of Naples, and granted to the duke of Savoy, as an indemnity, though insufficient, for his services. The barrier yielded to the dutch was, by successive curtailments, rendered little better than an empty name, and held on a tenure calculated to keep up a perpetual irritation with the house of Austria. Bethune, Aire, St. Venant, and, above all, Lisle, the most important point on the frontier, the key of Flanders, and the conquest on which Marlborough most prided himself, were restored to France. The measures adopted to prevent the union of the two monarchies, under the same sovereign, would have proved as futile as they were represented by the french themselves, had the expected death of the puny heir opened a way for the pretensions of Philip to the french crown. To England no real security was given for the preservation of internal peace and tranquillity;

* Mr. Pitt's dispatch to Sir Benjamin Keene; — Memoirs of the Kings of Spain, chap. 57.

the title of the queen was, indeed, acknowledged, and the succession in the protestant line sanctioned in words; but the pretender was suffered to remain in Loraine, to the continual agitation of the public mind, and with an evident view of taking the first opportunity to vindicate his claims to the throne, under the auspices of France.

Finally, the important branch of commerce with Spain, and the arrangement relative to the West Indies and America, were left on so uncertain and equivocal foundation, as to occasion perpetual disputes, and ultimately provoke subsequent wars.

The dutch, irritated by the shameful desertion of their cause, and the sacrifice of their future safety, conceived an aversion to England, which the accession of a new dynasty, and the interval of a century could scarcely obliterate.

Above all, the house of Austria, the only power then capable of balancing France, and the natural ally of England, was treated with still more neglect and indignity. Besides the loss of Spain, the Indies, and Sicily, which had long been identified with Naples, the Netherlands were granted on a tenure, which rendered the sovereignty almost nominal; and the emperor Charles was compelled to expose, to the indignation of a Bourbon prince, those brave and faithful catalans, whose fidelity and sufferings endeared them to his heart, and whose zeal and services merited from England a better fate.

We might fill pages with reflections on the dishonour and infamy of this inglorious peace, which may be regarded as the principal cause of the

miseries that for more than a century have prevailed in Europe; but we shall curtail our remarks with the energetic expression of bishop Fleetwood, in the celebrated preface to his sermons, "our enemies will tell the rest with pleasure."

On the 9th of April, when parliament re-assembled, the queen communicated to both houses the satisfactory information, that the treaty of peace was signed, and the ratifications would be speedily exchanged. She then dwelt with particular emphasis on her success, in securing the protestant succession, and added, "the perfect friendship between me and the house of Hanover, may convince such who wish well to both, and desire the quiet and safety of their country, how vain all attempts are to divide us! and those who would make a merit, by separating our interests, will never attain their ill ends."

The customary motion being made by the duke of Beaufort, for an address of thanks and congratulation to her majesty, upon the success of her measures for a general peace, an attempt of the opposition to exclude the word 'general' was rejected; as was likewise the insertion of a clause, that her majesty would be pleased to lay before the house the treaties of peace and commerce.

On the same day, the commons also unanimously voted an address of thanks, and negatived a motion for the communication of the treaties. Hence it was justly remarked, that the two houses concurred in addresses of thanks and congratulation, before they knew the specific conditions which they thus prematurely approved.

On the 5th of May, the peace was announced by proclamation, amidst the shouts of the populace, mingled with the murmurs of all true patriots.

The commons, however, evinced in one instance a recovered sense of their dignity, when the treaties of peace and commerce were communicated to parliament.

Strong objections were advanced against the 8th and 9th articles of the treaty of commerce, as highly favourable to the trade of France, and equally detrimental to that of England. The opposition was even headed by the speaker, Sir Thomas Hanmer, who had hitherto supported all the measures of government; and the able speech which he made on this occasion, caused the rejection of the bill for confirming the articles, by a majority of 194 against 185. *

A trifling compensation, however, was procured by the ministry, through a motion from the speaker, for an address of thanks to the queen, for the treaties of peace and commerce, which, though inconsistent with the former resolution, was carried by a majority of 156 against 72. This was the only specific proof of approbation, which could be obtained from the existing parliament; for the ministers could not venture to propose a farther address of congratulation, and all the indirect attempts of their adherents for that purpose were eluded and frustrated.

Notwithstanding the declaration made by the queen, of her anxiety to maintain the protestant suc-

* Journals of the Commons, and Boyer's Queen Anne, p. 637.

cession, suspicions were entertained of her sincerity, and the ministers were implicated in the same imputations. Accordingly on the 30th of June, the earl of Wharton moved an address to the queen, that she would use her most pressing instances, to procure the removal of the pretender from Loraine, and his exclusion from the territories of all princes and states in amity with her majesty. On this unexpected motion, a solemn pause prevailed; but being supported by Peterborough and other partisans of government, it was carried without a division, notwithstanding some objections, which the treasurer expressed with great earnestness and warmth.

The house appeared surprised at the equivocal answer given by the queen: "I take kindly your address, and your thanks for what I have done to establish the protestant succession. I shall repeat my instances to have that person removed; and I promise myself you will concur with me, that if we could cure our animosities and divisions at home, it would be the most effectual method to secure the protestant succession."

When the chancellor reported this answer, many of the peers, however favourable to government, could not suppress their concern; for even the duke of Buckingham, lord president of the council, frankly observed, that he had never heard of any instances made to the duke of Loraine, for removing the pretender out of his dominions. The absence of the two ministers on this critical occasion did not escape notice; and it was sarcastically observed, that had they been present, they might

have explained the queen's answer. But as they were then at dinner with the duke of Aumont, the french ambassador, lord Sunderland proposed another address, which was seconded by lord Nottingham, and carried without opposition. After returning thanks for the reply of the queen to the preceding address, it expressed their surprise, that her instances had not been effectual, and concluded with assurances of supporting her majesty, in a demand so necessary for her own honour and safety, and for the present and future peace and quiet of her people.

The queen giving no answer to this second address, on the 1st of July, general Stanhope made a similar motion in the house of commons, in still stronger terms, designating the pretender as the person who, in defiance of her majesty's most undoubted title to the crown, and the settlement in the illustrious house of Hanover, had assumed the title of king of these realms. To this address the queen briefly replied, that she thanked them for it, and would give directions according as they desired.

On the 7th of July, the public thanksgiving for the peace was celebrated at St. Paul's, attended with the usual state, except the presence of her majesty, who, from indisposition, could not assist at the solemnity.

On the 16th of July, the queen prorogued the parliament in person, to the 8th of August, and it was on that day dissolved. *

* Journals of the lords and commons; — Chandler's Debates; — Boyer's History of the Reign of Queen Anne; — and Political State.

Marlborough received regular intelligence of these proceedings in England during his residence at Frankfort. Soon after the prorogation of parliament, he removed to Antwerp, as a more secure asylum during the hostilities in the empire.

His feeling heart always sympathised in the sorrow of his friends; and we find a letter of condolence, written before his departure from Frankfort, to his faithful secretary, Cardonel, on the loss of his wife.

"*July* 24. 1713. — I would have written to you sooner, dear Cardonel, if I had believed it possible to say any thing to lessen your grief; but, I think, of all worldly misfortunes, the losing what one loves is the greatest, and nothing but time can ease you. However, I could not deny myself any longer the satisfaction of writing, to assure you, that I shall always be very sorry for any thing that is a trouble to you, and that I long for the opportunity of assuring you myself, that I am your humble servant and faithful friend.

"P. S. The duchess of Marlborough desires me to assure you of her true friendship and concern for you upon all occasions, and she would have wrote herself, but she thinks this will be the least troublesome to you." *

In consequence of the defection of England, and the secession of the other confederates, the emperor Charles was left to prosecute the war, with no other support than the germanic body. The imperial army, though headed by Eugene, and though more effective and better equipped than

* Cardonel Papers.

usual, could not resist the superior forces of France, commanded by Villars *, a general equally enterprising and skilful, and always fortunate, except when opposed to the transcendant genius of Marlborough. The progress of the gallic marshal was rapid and irresistible; the imperial troops, after a trifling opposition, retired before him; and Eugene had the mortification to witness the surprise of Kaiserslaütern, and the surrender of Landau, one of the keys of the empire. After these disasters, the imperial lines were forced; and the campaign closed by the capture of Friburg. The german states being impatient to be delivered from the horrors of an unsuccessful war, Charles, in conformity with the prudent advice of Eugene, entered into a negotiation with France. On the 26th of November, conferences were opened at Rastadt, and the two rival generals, mutually anxious for peace, made expeditious arrangements for a pacification, independent of England and the other allies.

The duke of Marlborough watched the conferences at Rastadt with an anxious eye. He was conscious that the emperor had sufficient reason to be dissatisfied with the faithless defection of the queen, and was not without alarm, lest he should support the cause of the exiled family, and give one of his nieces in marriage to the pretender, according to a prevalent rumour. † He was, however, speedily

* Voltaire has well depicted the character of this gasconading but gallant general: "Heureux Villars; fanfaron, plein de cœur!"

† It is singular that the treasurer, in a conversation with lord Cowper, unjustly accused the duke of Marlborough of being accessary in promoting this supposed marriage. Lord Cowper's Diary.

gratified with information from Eugene, that this report was wholly unfounded, and that the emperor would not interfere in the internal concerns of England.

"*Rastadt, March* 7. 1714.—I did not write to your highness sooner, because I was uncertain in what manner the present negotiation would terminate. At length I have just concluded with marshal de Villars, such a peace as the situation of affairs permits. The restoration of the two electors * was inevitable.

"I am ordered by the emperor to assure your highness, that he still entertains for you the same sentiments of regard, and that he will eagerly seize all opportunities of serving you, should any change take place in England, as there is too much reason to expect. His imperial majesty will always readily concur in all the measures, which the good party in England may desire; and I can sincerely assure you, that in the whole of this negotiation, there is not a single word that regards either the pretender or England.

"I intreat you to present my humble respects to the duchess of Marlborough, and to be convinced, that wherever I am, you have not a more sincere friend, on whom you may entirely rely; being, with great veneration," &c. †

Soon after the signature of the preliminaries, the conferences were adjourned to Baden, in Switzerland; and, before the close of the year, the de-

* Bavaria and Cologne.

† Translation from the french original.

finitive treaty was signed between France, the emperor, and the empire.

The observation of Eugene, that England was not mentioned in the treaty, was strictly true; and Charles consulted his dignity, by excluding the plenipotentiaries of his treacherous ally from any share in the conferences. The treaty of Ryswic was made the basis of the peace. France secured the possession of Landau, and restored Brisac, Friburg, and Kehl. Charles retained the Low Countries, under the condition of ratifying the barrier treaty; and, by connivance, all the spanish territories in Italy, excepting Sicily, together with the island of Sardinia. As he still, however, refused to acknowledge the title of Philip to the crown of Spain, the claims on that monarchy were left for future discussion, or to be decided by future wars.

But the hero who had saved the empire and the house of Austria from ruin, suffered by the restoration of the elector of Bavaria. It was not to be expected that the british ministry would interpose in favour of a general, whom they had so cruelly persecuted; and, therefore, the principality of Mindelheim was not excepted from the territories which were resumed by the elector.

Marlborough could not anticipate, without regret, the deprivation of a principality, which had been so honourably conferred upon him by Joseph, and which yielded a clear revenue of £2000 per annum. He therefore transmitted, through prince Eugene, a memorial, claiming from the gratitude of the emperor, an indemnity for the loss of so

distinguished and valuable a sovereignty. From the answer of the prince, we find that the court of Vienna retained, at least, the semblance of gratitude for his eminent services.

"*Vienna, May* 25. 1714.—As soon as I received your highness's letter, I did not fail to give the memorial to his imperial and catholic majesty, who ordered me to assure you, that he will never forget the good services you have rendered him and his family, and that he will contrive that your highness shall keep your sitting, and, in case the restitution of Mindelheim takes place, will indemnify you. You may be assured that I will omit nothing which may be serviceable to you. Of this, the friendship which has always existed between us may convince you. May your highness keep me in yours, and be persuaded of the veneration, &c.

"I beg you to assure the duchess of my profound respect. I do not yet know when I shall depart for Baden."

We soon afterwards find a still stronger assurance from the emperor himself, conveyed through count Bonneval, to the duchess.

"*Vienna, August* 8.—At the future congress, his imperial majesty will do all that is possible to sustain my lord duke in the possession of the principality of Mindelheim; but if it should so happen, that any invincible difficulty should occur in that affair, his imperial majesty will give his highness an equivalent principality out of his own hereditary dominions."

But all intercession was ineffectual. On the 24th of November, the emperor himself, after

formally announcing the reluctant restitution of the bavarian territories, informed the duke that Mindelheim, so justly and deservedly the reward of his valour, was necessarily included in that restitution; and expressed his hope that he would readily submit to this unavoidable arrangement. His imperial majesty at the same time confirmed his title to the rights and dignity of a prince of the holy empire, and to a seat in the college of princes; and concluded with assurances of his especial friendship and protection. *

Marlborough was not satisfied with these empty honours, and while he respectfully acquiesced in the loss of Mindelheim †, and testified his entire submission to the will of his imperial majesty, he made repeated applications for that indemnity which was justly his due. His illustrious friend, prince Eugene, supported his pretensions, and was empowered to repeat the assurance of a future indemnity.

" Sir; *Vienna, March* 26. 1715.

" I send you a letter written three months ago, not having been able to send it by Mr. Stanhope. I waited for a safe opportunity, and, therefore, I chose to make use of Mr. Cadogan ‡, who will give your highness an account of his commission, and that his imperial and catholic majesty thinks seriously of a just satisfaction to your highness.

* From the official translation of the latin original.

† Reply of Marlborough to the emperor's letter, Dec. 21. 1714.

‡ General Stanhope and Cadogan were successively sent to Vienna, for the purpose of obtaining the consent of the emperor to the barrier treaty.

This has also made me delay forwarding my first letter, wishing to send you some positive intelligence. We expect a project relative to the Tyrol, and Mr. Cadogan has spoken to me of another place; so that his imperial majesty will determine for one or the other, as soon as he has all proper information. Moreover, I hope the king of England will be aware of the confidence which his majesty reposes in him, and that every thing he does, in regard to the barrier, is in consideration for him. I will say nothing on the present conjuncture. Where you are, you will judge better than us of the business of France, Holland, and your own country. Here we have that of the north and east, which does not fail to employ us.

"I refer myself to Mr. Cadogan, and beg your highness to believe, that no one can be with more sincere friendship, and greater veneration," &c.

Other applications were occasionally made to counts Zinzendorf and Wratislaw, in the strongest terms, and both the duke and duchess received continual promises of an indemnity from the imperial ministers, in the name of their master. The only difficulty, indeed, seemed to consist in finding a suitable sovereignty, which the emperor had the power of dismembering from his hereditary countries, and a lordship in the Tyrol was repeatedly and specifically indicated, but a final decision was as repeatedly deferred, under the plea of waiting for farther information.* After much

* Letter from count Zinzendorf to the duke, Vienna, May 15, 1716.

delay and many fruitless appeals, Marlborough had, at length, the mortification to experience the futility of these assurances. Notwithstanding the repeated promises of the emperor, we cannot discover that he ever received the slightest equivalent, although some misinformed writers have declared the contrary; for as late as 1717, we find him still soliciting a recompense in vain. *

He still retained his rank of prince of the empire, and his representative assisted at the diet, the expences and charges being defrayed by the austrian treasury. The title of prince, as granted by Joseph, and extending to the female line, was confirmed by Charles; and his illustrious descendant still unites with the possession of Blenheim, the dukedom of Marlborough, and his other honours, the title and bearings of a prince of the holy Roman empire.

To avoid interruption in the subsequent narrative, we have thus terminated the account of this claim on the imperial court. We may conclude with the obvious remark, that the most eminent services are but too often ill requited, when they cease to be necessary or useful. †

* Draught of a letter in french from the duke of Marlborough to the emperor, preserved in the Cardonel Papers.

† Some authors have erroneously asserted that the duke was gratified with the landgraviate of Nellenburg, and others, with a lordship in the Tyrol; but no trace of such cessions exists in the archives of Austria, Bavaria, the Tyrol, or the Empire, nor can any evidence be found, that he received any equivalent in money.

Before I quit this subject, I must repeat my obligations to the bavarian minister, M. de Pfeffel, for procuring me information from the archives of Bavaria and the Tyrol, and to the earl of Normanton, for his assistance in obtaining an examination of the archives at Vienna.

CHAPTER 111.

1714.

Critical state of affairs in England.—Sentiments of the queen, and rivalry of Oxford and Bolingbroke.—Meeting of parliament.—Heterogeneous composition of the new house of commons.—Division of parties.—Consequent vacillation of counsels.—Struggles on the grand question, relative to the Protestant Succession.—Demand of a writ of summons to parliament, for the electoral prince—Reluctantly granted.—Alarms and indignation of the queen.—Prorogation of parliament.—Conduct of Marlborough during his residence on the continent.—Zeal in promoting the Protestant Succession.—His correspondence with the court of Hanover.—Attempts of the queen and Oxford to counteract the views of Marlborough and the hanoverian party.—Mission of Mr. Harley to Hanover.—Letters from Mr. Molyneux, the agent of Marlborough.—Death of the electress Sophia.—Consequences of that event.

During his residence at Antwerp, Marlborough was held in a perpetual state of suspense, anxiety, and alarm; for England stood on the perilous edge of civil convulsion.

From the repeated illnesses of the queen, the time seemed rapidly approaching, when the crown might be contended for on british ground, by the rival candidates, the son of James II., the lineal, but attainted heir, and a member of the house of Hanover, appointed by parliament, and acknow-

ledged by the sovereign, as the consitutional successor.

In the struggle of contending parties, we observe a queen anxious for the welfare of her subjects, but weak and misguided; agitated by conscientious scruples, in possessing a sovereignty to the exclusion of the legitimate heir, and solicitous to make compensation, by securing to him the reversion of her crown. At the same time we find her so timid and jealous of her authority, as to be no less repugnant to the preparatory measures in favour of a brother, whom she loved, than to those for the elevation of the electoral family, whom she detested. Her vacillation was aggravated by the efforts of the persons in whom she placed her greatest confidence. On one hand, lady Masham wrought on all her family partialities, and was the agent of continual representations from the courts of St. Germain and Versailles; on the other, she was assailed by the duchess of Somerset, who, like the duchess of Marlborough, no less artfully wrought on her dread of popery, and zeal for the protestant faith.

Her two principal ministers were also utterly opposed in character, principle, and manners. Oxford possessed integrity, disinterestedness, and morals, united with plausibility, subtlety, and dissimulation. He was sincerely devoted to the protestant succession; yet, for the preservation of his power, did not hesitate to flatter the courts of St. Germain and Versailles, and to assimilate himself with the jacobites, for the purpose of obtaining their sanction to the peace. He also affected to

court the whigs, and spared no efforts to conciliate the electoral family. Bolingbroke, on the other hand, was unprincipled, dissipated, and interested. Distinguished for brilliant talents, and a fascinating address, he was superior to his rival, both as a courtier and a statesman. Devoted to the tories, he disdained to imitate Oxford, in soliciting the support of the party from whom he differed in principle; and never condescended to flatter the whigs, or attempted to cultivate the favour of the house of Hanover.

In the actual state of affairs, Oxford was considered as prime minister, and as enjoying the sole confidence of the queen; but Bolingbroke was rapidly gaining ground, by his superior address, and congeniality of sentiment with his royal mistress. He increased his adherents, by his frank and decisive character, which was strikingly contrasted with the equivocating and mysterious conduct of his rival.

After several delays, occasioned by the political feuds in the cabinet, and the precarious state of the queen's health, the new parliament assembled, on the 18th of February, 1713–14. Sir Thomas Hanmer, though agreeable to neither of the rival ministers, was again nominated speaker, because they could not concur in the choice of any other person, and he was strongly supported by the whigs, as friendly to the Hanover line.

The new house of commons was of a different complexion from any which had preceded. It no longer exhibited the two distinct and hostile bodies of whigs and tories, but contained a heteroge-

neous mass of different parties, counteracting each other, and fluctuating in their opinions and resolutions.

Usually, the friends of government constituted one class, acting in concert, and in no case entering the lists of opposition; but in this singular parliament, the adherents of the court were divided into the partisans of Oxford, and the followers of Bolingbroke. The members of this body were united on questions which concerned the general measures of government, but were frequently observed to differ, when the interests of the rival leaders came in collision. Hence, even these auxiliaries successively ranged themselves under the standard of the whigs, the tories, or the jacobites, at the word of their respective chiefs; and it is remarkable, that in the grand question relative to the protestant succession, they often not only materially differed, but even occasionally appeared to renounce their own principles. One instance of this vacillation deserves to be particularly noticed, as it is related by Bolingbroke himself.

The ministers of the elector of Hanover having solicited the arrears of pay due to his troops, since the separation of the british forces, the treasurer determined to accede to the demand. Without the knowledge of the queen, or any communication with Bolingbroke, auditor Harley, in the committee for preparing the estimates, clandestinely introduced the claim; and it was ordered to be reported to the house, as a part of the yearly supply. Information of this manœuvre being

communicated to Bolingbroke, he held a meeting with the tories and jacobites; and a resolution being formed to oppose the grant, it was negatived. *

Among the different distinctions which characterised the new house of commons, the tories occupied the foremost rank, as the predominant party, but were weakened by a division into hanoverian and jacobite tories. The former were those who were attached to the constitution in church and state, and supported the measures of government, in all instances which did not affect the protestant succession; but, whenever that grand question was agitated, identified themselves with the whigs. The leader of this sect was the speaker, Sir Thomas Hanmer.

The sentiments of the jacobite tories will be sufficiently indicated by their name; and, in fact, they may be regarded as a class of the Stuart adherents, though less decided in their devotion to the exiled family than the avowed jacobites.

The scottish tories formed a peculiar party. Though united in general with the jacobites or tories, they occasionally deserted them, whenever the particular interests of their own country were concerned, or when any hopes of dissolving the union were entertained. We even find in this parliament a cabal of no less than forty or fifty, closely combined, and acting, on many occasions, in direct opposition to government; until the influence

* Bolingbroke's Correspondence; — Letter to lord Strafford, vol. iv. p. 532; — Lockhart's Papers, p. 468.

of Bolingbroke seemed likely to prevail over that of his rival, when they were persuaded by his professions again to range themselves under the standard of the court. * With these two last classes the real jacobites were intermingled, and formed so numerous a body, that with the aid of the crown, and the support of the partisans of Bolingbroke, they hoped to reverse the order of succession established by parliament, and restore the hereditary line.

In the next degree stood the whigs, an impenetrable phalanx, the never-failing champions of the protestant succession. Though inferior in numbers to the tories as a body, their united strength was such, that if they were joined by either of the two tory divisions, or, as it even sometimes happened, were assisted by the jacobites, they were enabled to constitute a decided majority. In this struggle of conflicting interests, they acted a firm and uniform part, never swerving from the main path of public duty, and careless whom they supported, or whose aid they obtained, provided they succeeded in securing the accession of the protestant line.

From this incongruous state of the commons, were derived, as might naturally be expected, fluctuating sentiments, and contradictory resolutions, which seemed incomprehensible to all who were unacquainted with the real state of parties, and the variable temper and interests of this heterogeneous body.

In the house of lords a similar fluctuation pre-

* Lockhart's State Papers, vol. ii. p. 478.

vailed, not from the contention of discordant parties, as in the commons, but from the conflicting interests of the two rival ministers, and the fears and jealousies of the queen, whose opinion influenced a considerable portion of this illustrious assembly. We derive this interesting delineation of the state of parties from the memoirs of the jacobite leader, Lockhart; and we find it confirmed in a confidential letter from the secretary himself, to the earl of Strafford.

"*Whitehall, March* 23. 1713–14.—In both houses there are the best dispositions I ever saw; but I am sorry to tell you that these dispositions are unimproved: the whigs pursue their plan with good order, and in concert.

"The tories stand at gaze, expect the court should regulate their conduct, and lead them on; and the court seems in a lethargy. Nothing, you see, can come of this, but what would be at once the greatest absurdity, and the greatest misfortune.

"The minority, and that minority unpopular, must get the better of the majority, who have the sense of the nation on their side. All that can be done, is doing, to prevail on our friend, my lord treasurer, to alter his measures, to renew a confidence with the tories, and a spirit in them, and to give a regular motion to all the wheels of government. I am sanguine enough to hope that we shall prevail. Indeed, it would be pity to lose by management, what none can wrest by force out of our hands.

"I write thus freely to you, because, in such conjunctures especially, you ought not to be igno-

rant of the true state of affairs at home, and because I know that the part I ought to act towards a friend, I may safely act towards a man of honour. You shall hear again from me, the moment I see through the present *confused workings of court and party.*" *

These brief hints will serve to explain the contradictory votes and resolutions of the legislature, in this extraordinary session, and will shew how singularly the clashing views of all combined in eventually promoting the great object of the Revolution.

On the 2d of March, the queen addressed the new parliament. After notifying that she had obtained a safe and honourable peace for her own people, and for the greater part of her allies, she expressed hopes, that her interposition might be effectual to complete the restoration of public tranquillity. She then boasted of having delivered her subjects from a consuming land war, and of following the example of the wisest of her predecessors, in preserving the equilibrium of Europe; adding, that the kingdom could only flourish by trade, and would be most formidable, by the right application of its naval force. After the usual demand of supplies, the remainder of the speech evinced extreme anxiety to exonerate herself from suspicions, which she declared to be maliciously circulated, that the protestant succession in the house of Hanover was in danger under her government.

Addresses of thanks were carried without oppo-

* Bolingbroke's Correspondence, vol. ii. p. 494.

sition, and, soon afterwards, the peace was sanctioned by the unanimous vote of the legislature.

But all the declarations of the queen and her ministers could not remove the general impression entertained, that the protestant succession was really in danger. Accordingly this delicate question became the principal subject of deliberation, and produced that diversity of sentiment which could not fail to arise in so heterogeneous a body. At one time, the protestant succession was voted not to be in danger, and the bill against schism inspired the jacobites with the most sanguine hopes of ultimate success; at another, its perilous state was proved, by the repeated motions for the removal of the pretender from Loraine; and, above all, by the vote in the house of lords, proclaiming a reward of £5000 for seizing his person, should he land in England; a reward which was augmented by the commons to the enormous amount of £100,000. Both these motions were carried without a division.

While the proceedings of the legislature were characteristic of a body actuated by no regular principle, and guided by no common object; the queen and ministers seemed to prove the fallacy of their own professions, by their attempts to break the line of succession.

Men were almost publicly enlisted for the service of the pretender, and his health was openly pledged at numerous meetings and clubs, held by jacobites of all ranks and denominations in the metropolis. The army was beginning to be new-modelled, colonels were removed from their regiments, and

replaced by others of the Stuart party. Governors were deprived of their posts, and superseded by those of adverse principles; the direction of affairs in Ireland and Scotland was entrusted to jacobite hands.

In this alarming crisis, the clamours for the residence of the electoral prince in England, were revived with increasing vehemence. As he had already been created duke of Cambridge, it was only necessary to obtain the customary summons to the house of lords. In conformity, therefore, with the advice of the whigs, baron Schutz, the hanoverian resident, applied for the writ. The chancellor, objecting that it was not usual to grant writs to peers who resided out of the kingdom, was confounded with a reply, that the prince intended to reside, and might be expected in England before it was issued. After some farther delays and objections, under the plea of preserving due respect to the queen, it was at length reluctantly granted.

The queen was extremely agitated by this sudden and unexpected proceeding, and wrote several letters to the electoral family, in which she earnestly deprecated such contemptuous disregard of her prerogative, exhorting them, in the strongest terms, not to give countenance to a measure, no less insulting to her feelings, than derogatory to the dignity of her crown.

Baron Schutz was also forbidden to appear at court, and quitted England to convey the writ to Hanover.

In the midst of these political feuds, the queen

prorogued the parliament, with a speech indicative of high indignation. After the usual thanks for the supplies, she expressed her hope to meet them again early in the winter, in such a temper as would be necessary, for improving all the advantages of the peace. She then concluded in a tone, which shews how deeply she resented the intended residence of the electoral prince in England.

" My chief concern is, to preserve to you and to your posterity our holy religion, and the liberty of my subjects, and to secure the present and future tranquillity of my kingdoms. But I must tell you plainly, that these desirable ends can never be obtained, unless you bring the same dispositions on your parts; unless all groundless jealousies, which create and foment divisions amongst you, be laid aside; and unless you shew the same regard for my prerogative, and for the honour of my government, as I have always expressed for the rights of my people." *

During these political conflicts in his native country, Marlborough maintained an unremitted intercourse with his friends, and was still ready to support that cause for which he had fought and conquered, and for his adherence to which he had been driven into exile. Had he chosen to desert his party, and vindicate the peace of Utrecht, he might yet have recovered the favour of the queen, and enjoyed the protection of the ministers; he might have been exempted from all the persecutions to which his opposition exposed him.

* Journals.

But we find him abroad, consistently persevering in the same honourable path, and labouring to promote that protestant succession in the house of Hanover, which he considered as essential to the welfare of England, and the tranquillity of Europe. Nor do we perceive in his conduct, the slightest fluctuation of sentiment, notwithstanding the opprobrious accusations levelled against him by jacobite spies, and repeated by partial or misguided historians. Few letters or documents are preserved at Blenheim relating to this critical æra; but those that remain, as well as his correspondence, published among the Hanover papers, indubitably prove his undeviating anxiety in the cause of liberty and religion. Convinced, also, that his native country was menaced with a counter-revolution, he sent general Cadogan, to make the necessary arrangements with general Stanhope, and the leaders of the hanoverian interest *, for transporting troops to England, on the demise of the queen, and for taking every precaution to frustrate the hopes of the jacobites. He even engaged to use his endeavours in securing the fidelity of the troops stationed at Dunkirk, and to embark at their head, in support of the same cause. He also urged the elector of Hanover not to spare his treasure in gaining adherents, and offered to assist him with a loan of £20,000. So gratified, indeed, was the electoral house with these proofs of his zeal, that, in return, the elec-

* This fact is stated from the narrative of the duchess, and confirmed by the accusations of Bolingbroke and the jacobites, and the testimonies in the Hanover Papers.

tress Sophia intrusted him with a blank warrant, appointing him commander-in-chief of her troops and garrisons, on her accession to the crown.

These measures are detailed in his letters to the court of Hanover, and we should deem it injustice to his memory not to submit to the reader this interesting correspondence, although a part has been already given to the public. * Robethon, his former correspondent, and now the confidential secretary at Hanover, was the principal channel of these communications.

The Duke of Marlborough to Robethon.

" *Antwerp, Nov.* 30. 1713. — Sir; I have not troubled you since my coming to this place, because nothing of the least consequence has offered; but Mr. Cadogan being now returned from England, with an account of the present situation of things, and disposition of people's minds there, I thought it necessary to take notice in general to you of it, and, at the same time, acquaint you, I shall send him to the Hague in some few days, to communicate all matters to M. Bothmar, in order to his transmitting, in the most ample manner, to his electoral highness, the sentiments and thoughts of our friends in England, concerning the unhappy condition we are in, which, I am sorry to tell you, grows worse every day, and will very soon be desperate, unless some speedy remedy is applied. Though the whole conduct of our ministry, both as to affairs at home and abroad, leaves no room to doubt of their in-

* Hanover Papers for 1713 and 1714;— Macpherson, vol. ii.

tentions to bring in the pretender; yet I cannot forbear mentioning some circumstances relating to it, which have happened since the last sessions of parliament. I shall begin with our court's entering into a stricter and greater union with France than ever, notwithstanding the collusive manner with which the french king has evaded executing those articles made with England, which were for our advantage; and as the highest and most convincing mark of the double dealing and pernicious designs of our ministers. I shall, in the next place, instance their affectation of writing to such princes, not to receive the pretender, into whose countries they are sure he will never come; and their making no step in earnest towards the removing him out of Loraine, notwithstanding the addresses of both houses, and that his being there or in France is the same thing. By which means, the article in the treaty of peace, for the security of the protestant succession, is eluded. To this must be added, the giving all employments, military and civil, to notorious jacobites; the putting the governments of Scotland and Ireland into the hands of two persons who are known friends to the pretender *; the choosing the 16 lords to serve for Scotland, of whom, two were with the pretender last summer, and most of the rest declared jacobites; the ministers receiving, with such distinction, Sir Patrick Lawless, and, under the pretence of his transacting the business of Spain, admitting him into their confidence and privacy,

* The Earl of Mar and Sir Constantine Phipps.

though an irish papist, and an avowed agent of the pretender's; the violence and force used in the election of members for the city of London; the invading the freedom of elections all over the kingdom, by corruption, oppression, and bribery, in order to get such persons chosen as are in the interest of the pretender; the animating the clergy to preach up hereditary and testamentary right, both which principles are destructive to the succession; the encouraging the publishing that pernicious book, lately writ to support those doctrines, which, though high treason by our laws; yet this book *, which asserts them, was writ either by direction or connivance of the lord treasurer, as may be judged by the following circumstances: First, the materials for it were collected either out of manuscripts in his own library, or out of such public records as Mr. Lowndes was known to have been employed in the search of: lord treasurer's library keeper corrected the manuscript, and the printing of the book was published in the Gazette; and though the printer was taken up, for form's sake, the sale of the book is openly permitted, and great numbers of them sent gratis all over the kingdom.

"Many instances of the same nature might be joined to these I have mentioned; but I think these more than sufficient to demonstrate the views of the ministry, and the danger of delaying any longer the entering into effectual measures for the preventing of them. But as this matter is of the

* This book is entitled, "The hereditary Right of the Crown of England asserted." — See Boyer's Reign of Queen Anne.

highest moment, and that the safety of our religion, property, and liberty, will depend upon the resolutions to be now taken, our friends in England submit every thing to his electoral highness's great wisdom and discretion, and will execute with zeal and pleasure, whatever instructions or orders he shall please to give them in this most important affair. However, they believe themselves obliged, at the same time, both in duty to his electoral highness, and out of concern for the safety and good of their country, to represent in the most humble and submissive manner, that, considering the present state of things in England, nothing can so effectually assure the succession, as his electoral highness going there, or, if that cannot be hoped for, the sending the prince, which would animate and encourage to the greatest degree, all those of both parties, who wish well to the succession, and break the measures of those who are against it. But, though this is the unanimous sense of our friends in England; yet they leave, and wholly submit it to his electoral highness's prudence and judgment, and desire that this their advice may be understood to proceed from hearts full of affection and unalterable attachment to his electoral highness's person and interests; for the promoting of which, they will be always ready to venture their lives and fortunes. As I write you this, in the last confidence, I desire it may be communicated only to his electoral highness and M. Bernstorf; and, for fear of accidents, you will be pleased afterwards to burn it. I am, with truth, yours."

Nor did our illustrious patriot confine his cares and exertions to his own country; he no less earnestly employed that influence which he possessed in Holland, to awaken the States to a sense of the danger with which they were menaced, should the british ministry succeed in their attempts to overthrow the constitution. With the same view, he laboured to restore that harmony, which had been interrupted between the emperor and the republic, and which he justly considered as essential to the tranquillity of Europe, and the welfare of England.

He developes these views in another letter to Robethon.

" *Antwerp, Jan.* 6. 1714. — By the accounts Mr. Cadogan brings from the Hague, as well as by what has been writ from thence, it is evident the principal regents of the republic begin to be now convinced of the designs of the english ministry to bring in the pretender; and, since the destruction of their state must inevitably follow, they have warmly taken the alarm, and seem disposed to enter into any measures towards preventing it, which the form of their government will allow of. And, as they very well know, a strict friendship with the emperor and empire is absolutely necessary for attaining this great end, they are, at present, very desirous to reconcile themselves to his imperial majesty; but the managements they are outwardly forced to keep with France and the english ministry, obliging them to proceed in this matter, with the utmost secrecy and caution, they are resolved to transact it privately,

by such friends as both sides have an entire confidence in; and, to shew how much they are in earnest, they appear inclined to recede from several advantages given them by their barrier treaty. As his imperial majesty has likewise the interest of England at heart, and believes his own safety concerned in securing the succession of his electoral highness and family, it is hardly to be doubted, but such temperaments may be found, by the common friends aforementioned, as will re-establish the former union between the emperor and the republic; which matter being explained in the memorials transmitted by M. Bothmar, I must refer to them.

" For the expedient you mentioned, of an address of thanks for the good offices employed, and endeavours used, to remove the pretender, and the grounding an invitation on their having proved ineffectual, I shall take the liberty, since you desire my private opinion, to tell you freely, I am apprehensive that matter may be so artfully managed by the court, as to get the first part of the proposition passed, and the other dropt; the ill consequences of which are so obvious, that it is not necessary to explain them. However, if his electoral highness shall not approve of what our friends in England have humbly represented, they will be ready to execute, with all the zeal and fidelity imaginable, this or any other thing his electoral highness shall judge for his service; and, since the ministers drive on matters so fast in favour of the pretender, every body must agree, if something farther be not done in the next sessions of

parliament, towards securing the succession, it is to be feared it may be irretrievably lost. Mr. Cadogan returns in about fourteen days to the Hague, in order to receive his electoral highness's commands from M. Bothmar, in relation to what he is to say to our friends, at his return into England. I am ever yours."

Oxford could not be unacquainted with the negotiations between the electoral family and the hanoverian party in England, through the agency of Marlborough. This subtle politician, therefore, resorted to his usual craft, to counteract the labours of his opponents, and to turn their intrigues against themselves. He had already persuaded the queen to express in her speeches unusual regard towards the electoral family, and even induced her to assume an appearance of cordiality, which was foreign to her feelings. Perceiving that this semblance of harmony between the two courts was peculiarly mortifying to the whigs, he carried his dissimulation still farther, by sending his relative, Mr. Harley, to Hanover, to convey testimonies of the queen's solicitude for the protestant succession, and his own devotion to the electoral family.

This unexpected mission created considerable jealousy among the adherents of the house of Hanover. To counteract its effects, Marlborough sent Mr. Molineux, an irish gentleman of fortune, to the electoral court; and in his correspondence with Robethon, strove to expose the duplicity of the treasurer, and the danger of listening to his overtures.

"*Antwerp, May* 5. 1714.—It is so evident

that the queen's ministers are determined to place the pretender on the throne, that it would be losing one's time to produce proofs of it. Their greatest desire, and their only view in Mr. Harley's embassy is, to obtain some declaration from the elector, which may impose upon the nation, and make it believe that your court is satisfied with them. If you have fallen into this snare, it will render all the efforts of your friends of no avail; but we rely upon the great prudence of his electoral highness.

"A more proper time for demanding the writ for the electoral prince could not have been chosen; for you see how many of the richest and most considerable among the tories declare for you, and acknowledge that they were deceived by the ministry, who lose so much ground in both houses, that you may depend upon it, they will take care not to call the second session of this parliament, before they have executed their design in favour of the pretender. Otherwise, they will run a risk of being prosecuted, for having betrayed their country, and violated the laws; and as they cannot justify themselves in that respect, it is not to be believed, that they will expose themselves to the hazard of another session; for if they lose any more ground, however small, their ruin is certain.

"Luckily, this session is to continue for two months longer, as no supplies are yet found; so that the electoral prince will have time enough, before the end of it, to arrive and take his seat in parliament, in which case, the balance will incline entirely to your side, as it begins to do already,

upon the mere rumour of his coming; so that you may judge what effect his presence would produce. Accordingly, our friends write to me, in that case, the parliament will not rise before they have settled a pension of £40,000 sterling, for a subsistence to the prince, who will have nothing to do but to make his court to the queen, and caress the ministers, without meddling in any thing. By this remedy, the succession will be secured, without risk, without expence, and without war; and, likewise, it is very probable that France, seeing herself prevented in that manner, will abandon her design of assisting the pretender.

" In my humble opinion, it would be proper to use dispatch, and that the prince should set out before lord Paget * arrives. This journey of the prince, attended with the success, which there is reason to expect from it, cannot fail to give the elector new influence, and much greater consequence over all Europe, as he will secure to himself thereby the crown of Great Britain, which will attach the emperor, Holland, and the court of Prussia to him, and render him the arbiter of the differences of the north. Whereas if this opportunity is lost (which, according to appearances, will be the last) the contrary will happen, and the influence of his electoral highness, at other courts, will suffer considerably by it, especially after the great noise which this demand of the writ for the electoral prince makes every where, which leaves no one room to doubt of his setting out soon; so

* Lord Paget was nominated envoy to Hanover on the return of Mr. Harley from his temporary mission.

that if he does not set out at all, your friends in England, who have exposed themselves so generously for your interest, will be absolutely ruined, and the succession in the utmost danger, which cannot fail to be productive of bad consequences to your court, and in all the other courts of Europe.

" It is easy for your court to conceive of what importance it is, that the prince should arrive while the parliament is sitting, as the reason to justify his journey is, the right he has to take his seat in parliament, and the writ by which the queen calls him to it. I hope you will send me good news.

" I believe Mr. Molyneux will be now at your court. I recommend him to you, as being a man of quality, who has very large possessions in Ireland, but principally as a man of parts and of merit, with whose good principles I am well acquainted. I flatter myself that he will be well received by their highnesses. I am, &c.

" I may add farther, that the prince being but the third in the order of succession, and coming alone, without troops, the queen cannot be justly offended."

The subsequent letter, which, though without date or address, was evidently written to Robethon * in May, is worthy of particular attention. It does credit to the comprehensive mind of Marlborough, who overlooked the narrow distinctions of party, in his zeal for the public weal, and

* It is from a copy in the hand-writing of the duchess, and endorsed by her, " To a Correspondent at Hanover."

endeavoured to unite the moderate tories, as well as the whigs, in defence of the legal settlement. It collaterally enables us to trace his motives for not signing the whig association*, which he evidently considered as an expedient, calculated to render this great public concern, a mere object of party.

" M. Bothmar has sent me a copy of the letter concerning the observations that were made at Barleduc. † I believe there may be inconvenience in sending the original letter; but I think if M. Schutz has a copy of it, with orders to communicate the substance to all our friends, both whigs and tories, 'tis probable it may have a good effect; and if they find it will be useful to produce the original, it will be in your power to do it.

" I am so certain of what her majesty and the ministers design, as to the succession, and it is so evident to all mankind that have any sense, that I will not take up your time in arguments upon that matter, nor trouble you with instances, to shew how little it can signify to have their promises upon any account. I am persuaded, if words would serve, at this time, they will make very little difficulty to say any thing, in order to draw from the electress an answer that would give them but a handle to impose upon the nation, that is satisfied, which, no doubt, was the whole design of Mr.

* Tindal, vol. xviii. Dr. Birch, who wrote this part of the history, states, that Sir Richard Onslow was deputed by general Stanhope and the whig leaders, to obtain the signature of Marlborough to this association, but that all his representations failed of success.

† The temporary residence of the pretender in Loraine.

Harley's embassy; and would, for ever, have ruined the endeavours of our best friends, and disabled them from doing any service to the elector or their country. But I don't doubt of his highness's taking effectual care to prevent such a mischief; and since so many of the considerable tories have owned publicly that they have been deceived by the ministers, 'tis reasonable to expect they should do something to secure their religion and laws, and not trust them in the hands of men, that have so plainly betrayed their country. If something of this kind is not done before the parliament rises, I can't but apprehend these ministers will prevent being troubled with another; for the mask is now taken off, and men that have so little to say for themselves, will not run the hazard of another session. Upon these considerations, and some others, I can't but wish extremely that his electoral highness would use all the means that are possible to shew the honest men in both parties the danger they are in, at a time that France is in so good a condition: and as nothing can save us from the mischiefs intended but the parliament, it is my humble opinion, that should shew that 'tis necessary that there should be a farther security for the protestant succession: and one great thing towards that, they must needs think, is an honest ministry. Pray do me the favour to give my humble service to M. Bernsdorf. As for having two in the admiralty, I think that or any other request would be of no use, but to give advantages to those that certainly mean nothing but to deceive."

Fortunately, the subtlety of Oxford defeated

itself. Unable or unwilling to give a definitive proof of his sincerity, his extravagant professions, when contrasted with his real conduct, made the mission of his relative appear no less insulting than ridiculous. Mr. Molyneux, in a letter to the duchess, briefly gives the result of this memorable embassy.

"*May* 7. 1714. * * * * I would to God I could send you as good news from hence, as your grace sends me, when you say there is hope of my having the honour to see you in a country-house in England. I have not yet been at court, but when I have, I shall have the honour to write to you again. As yet, I have only heard that Mr. Harley's forerunners had made a great noise of what he was coming to do for this family. A pension to the electress, and invitation to the electoral prince, were as positively given out to be his business here, as that he was to come. But since his arrival, this is all dwindled into nothing: we hear no more of these things; and his great promises to the court amount to no more than the giving an office of £ 400 per annum, to one Wind, an english chamberlain to the electress, and a tory, for which, and for another accident that happened here some days since, they tell me he will certainly be disgraced."

"*Hanover, Friday, May* 18. 1714.—This day, I think, it is about ten days since I arrived at Hanover, so that I am now able to assure your grace and my lord duke of the perfect regard and affection this court preserves for both your merits, which, on a thousand occasions, I have had the

pleasure to perceive, in every body I have conversed with, as well as in the court itself. The electoral princess, who is certainly one of the best ladies in the world, does nothing but ask me the most affectionate questions possible about your grace and my lord, about your manner of passing your time, how you are diverted, and whether you are easy; and, in short, one would think she had seen and been intimate with you, she seems to love you so well. I cannot give your grace a better instance of the regard they have to any thing that comes from my lord Marlborough, than to assure you, that I have been very well received by every body here, only by having the honour of his protection.

"On Tuesday last Mr. Harley and all his suite went away for England. I believe he is as little satisfied with his negotiation here, as the court is; for I hear he has had very plain and strong memorials given him, on his departure, as to what may be done on the succession; and I know that, on taking leave, he had some pretty plain things said to him on the state of affairs. The electoral princess told me herself, that on this occasion, when he spoke of the present happiness of Europe in peace, and in a prospect of every thing now flourishing and doing well, she made him this answer, that nobody had a firmer trust in God and Providence than she had, and, therefore, she did not doubt every thing would do well and flourish."

Mr. Harley had scarcely taken his departure, before baron Schutz arrived, with the writ for summoning the duke of Cambridge, and, at the

same time, bearing the most pressing invitations from the hanoverian party, for his immediate departure to England. At the same time, letters arrived from the queen and treasurer, containing the warmest professions of regard to the electoral family.

These incidents created great hesitation in the court of Hanover, as we find from farther details in the letters of Mr. Molyneux.

" *May* 29. 1714. — Your account of the reconciliation of the sorcerer and his familiar * seems very credible; at least we may be sure, that it is fear draws any honest protestations from them. I should never have given ear to these protestations before, but since I am at Hanover, much less than ever; and, indeed, it is here as plain as that † is the worst woman in the world, that she is not affected to this house, or at least her ministers are quite otherwise. It were as endless as useless to give your grace instances of this, but I must have leave to run over a few. There are now seven packets due from M. Krayenberg ‡ to this court, though all the other letters of the said posts are come constantly to Hanover. During Harley's stay here, by him, and since by another hand, Chateauneuf, at the Hague, knows more of the proceedings here than we do, who are in the town; but, above all, of the letters from the queen to the elector and electress, which the electress shewed

* Lord Oxford and lord Bolingbroke.

† A word is omitted which evidently refers to the queen.

‡ Krayenberg was the hanoverian minister in London, and Chateauneuf, the french minister at the Hague.

me. Nothing can be more kind in the world, and lord treasurer's the same; and yet the plain design is visibly nothing else, but to draw a confession from this house, that they are satisfied with the ministry, and have a confidence in a good understanding with the queen. This was the point to be carried by Harley's journey, and by those letters; but he was terribly disappointed; for in the answers there was not a word of such good understanding; but there was an article to this effect, in the elector's answer, which I read, 'that he thought it would be mutually good, for 'both their interests, that some one of this house 'should have the honour to pay his court to the 'queen in England.' This article was carried with great difficulty in the council here, and is the only step made to support the demand of the prince's writ; and, which is more, is the only one which, I believe, will be made. I am sure my lord Marlborough knows this court so well, he can believe this; but if he won't, I can say no more but that it is my opinion, and that I am more amazed at the difficulties the succession meets here, than at those it meets in London. I do believe the prince will not go over, and for this session, it is almost despaired of by his best friends; God knows what may happen before the next. For my part, I prepare myself for poverty and banishment; and I no more employ my thoughts on the happiness of England, but where to find the most easy retreat. This is a melancholy prospect; the grounds of it are too long to tell you; but I would to God it were not true. There are here such humours,

such jealousies, and such villainies, as will one day undo us, if it be not done already. I find no time better to end, than by cutting off this disagreeable tale, in giving myself the pleasure to assure your grace, &c.

" I shall stay here till what I suspect is made public, and then I think I shall go on northwards."

In the midst of this doubt and hesitation, a messenger brought other letters from the queen and the treasurer. Finding that they could not cajole the electoral family by professions, they resorted to threats, in order to prevent the prince from availing himself of his summons to parliament.

The letter to the prince was bitter and reproachful, chiding him for giving ear to such expedients, as the demand of the writ, without knowing her majesty's sentiments. The letter to the electress was somewhat more guarded, but coupled with a menace too obvious to be mistaken. That to the elector was written in a tone of still greater indignation: after repeating her anxious wishes for promoting the settlement, the queen added, " I am firmly persuaded you would not suffer the smallest diminution of your authority. I am no less delicate in this respect; and I am determined to oppose a project, so contrary to my royal authority, however fatal the consequences may be." *

* The two former letters, as well as that of the treasurer, are printed in Boyer's Political State, and in other publications; but that to the elector was deemed so insulting, that he found it necessary to apologize for its omission. It is, however, introduced into Macpherson's Hanoverian Papers, vol. ii. p. 621.

The letter from Oxford was perfectly characteristic. After professing his own attachment to the electoral family and their interests, he recommended the electress to rely implicitly on the friendship of the queen, as the only means of securing the accession of her family; and earnestly dissuaded her from identifying her interests with those of the whigs, by dwelling on the danger and impolicy of making the narrow measures of a party the standard of her future government.

By order of the electress, copies of these letters were sent to the duke of Marlborough; and, in transmitting them, Mr. Molyneux gives an interesting detail of the effect they produced.

"*Hanover, Thursday, June* 7. 1714.—I am directed by the electress to send your grace the inclosed, which arrived at Hanover, by express, on Tuesday, but were not delivered till yesterday at noon. I have not time, or I had translated the queen's for you; but my lord will explain them to you, and let you know that there is no hand villainous enough to write them, but that one from whence they come. This court is so openly honest in their proceedings, that they would be glad to disperse these letters among their friends in England; whereas their correspondence is so false and hidden, as that the express declared, till the moment the letters were read, that they were to invite the prince over, and I would lay my life the ministers declare the same in London."

In fact, the result was still more fatal than was at first apprehended; for the aged electress was so deeply affected with the anxiety of the moment,

that her feeble frame appears to have sunk under the conflict of contending passions. The circumstances of her sudden death are detailed with no less feeling than interest, in a subsequent letter from Mr. Molyneux.

"*Hanover, June* *, 1714. — The last post I finished my letters about six in the evening. Not an hour after the post went, I went directly afterwards to Hernhausen, the country-house of the court, and there the first thing I heard was, that the good old electress was just dying in one of the public walks. I ran up there, and found her just expiring in the arms of the poor electoral princess, and amidst the tears of a great many of her servants, who endeavoured in vain to help her. I can give you no account of her illness, but that I believe the chagrin of those villainous letters I sent you last post, has been in a great measure the cause of it. The Rheingravine, who has been with her these fifteen years, has told me she never knew any thing make so deep an impression on her as the affair of the prince's journey, which, I am sure, she had to the last degree at heart; and she has done me the honour to tell me so twenty times. In the midst of this concern those letters arrived, and those I verily believe have broke her heart, and brought her with sorrow to the grave. The letters were delivered on Wednesday at noon. That evening when I came to court, she was at cards, but was so full of these letters, that she got

* The electress died on the 28th of May, O. S., which fixes the date of this letter about the 9th of June.

up and ordered me to follow her into the garden, where she gave them to me to read, and walked, and spoke a great deal in relation to them. I believe she walked three hours that night. The next morning, which was Thursday, I heard she was out of order; and on going immediately to court, she ordered me to be called into her bedchamber. She gave me the letters I sent you to copy; she bid me send them next post, and bring them afterwards to her to court. That was on Friday. In the morning on Friday, they told me she was very well, but seemed very chagrined. She was dressed, and dined with the elector as usual. About four she did me the honour to send me to town, for some other copies of the same letters, and then she was still perfectly well. She worked and talked very heartily in the Orangerie. After that, and about six, she went out to walk in the gardens, and was still very well. A shower of rain came, and as she was walking pretty fast, to get to shelter, they told her she walked a little too fast. She answered, 'I believe I do,' and dropped down in saying those words, which were her last. They raised her up, chaffed her with spirits, tried to bleed her; but it was all in vain, and when I came up to her, she was as dead as if she had been four days so. No princess ever died more regretted, and I infinitely pity those servants, that have known her a long time, when I that have had the honour to be known to her but a month, can scarce refrain from tears in relating this."

The death of the electress Sophia made a considerable alteration in the state of parties in Eng-

land, as well as in the situation of the duke of Marlborough.

Notwithstanding her advanced age of 84, she possessed, till the time of her death, an unusual degree of spirit and energy, saying, that if she could but live to have "Sophia, Queen of England," engraven on her tomb, she should die contented. She had manifested considerable jealousy of her son's interference in the affairs of England, and she expressed great eagerness for the journey of the electoral prince. She was more inclined to the tories than to the whigs, held a confidential correspondence with the earl of Strafford, and implicitly confided in the duke of Marlborough, to whom she readily entrusted the fullest powers for the furtherance of her accession.

Her death, however, relieved the elector from considerable difficulties: he was no longer controlled by her authority, and was enabled to adopt an uniform and consistent plan of conduct. Although he placed his principal reliance on the whigs, yet being of a prudent and cautious temper he did not neglect the tories. Declining to irritate the queen, by permitting his son to accept the invitation to England, refusing to expend his treasure in strengthening his interest, or to interfere in factious cabals, he appeared almost too indifferent, to stretch out his hand to the sceptre, which was within his grasp; and adroitly left his interests to the management of his adherents and agents. Although he treated the duke of Marlborough with a semblance of respect, he never forgot the supposed slight which he had experienced in 1708,

when Marlborough concealed from him the projected operations of the campaign. * This jealousy had been recently fomented by the artifices of Oxford, who did not fail, by means of Mr. Harley, to bring into view the former correspondence of Marlborough with the house of Stuart. The elector, however, was too circumspect, to suffer any public manifestation of these prejudices to escape him; but encouraged Marlborough to persevere in his exertions, and to identify himself with the hanoverian party in England.

* See Chapters 65 and 68.

CHAPTER 112.

1714.

State of affairs in England. — Effects of the rivalry between the two ministers. — Dismission of Oxford. — Bolingbroke intrusted with the arrangement of a new administration. Proposed promotion of the jacobites. — Alarming illness of the queen. — Proceedings of Bolingbroke and his adherents — Baffled by the whigs and the hanoverian party. — The duke of Shrewsbury appointed lord treasurer. — Measures adopted to ensure the accession of the elector of Hanover. — Death of the queen. — Accession of George the first. — Marlborough prepares to return to England. — Motives for his conduct. — Letters from the duchess of Marlborough to Mrs. Clayton.

Meanwhile the vessel of state was tossed on a stormy sea, and exposed to imminent danger of shipwreck, by the rivalry of the two pilots, who were contending for the helm.

Oxford, by his artful duplicity, in paying court successively to every party, had rendered himself equally contemptible to all. He had offended the queen, by his overtures to the electoral family, and had not succeeded in obtaining their confidence. In this critical situation, his only dependence rested on the favour of the sovereign; but in her mind a sinister change had taken place. She was beset by lady Masham, whom he had alienated by his opposition to the grant of a pension, and other

emoluments, which she was anxious to obtain. She was also wrought upon, by the artful representations of Bolingbroke, who affected to develope his intrigues with the court of Hanover, and accused him even of caballing with the duke of Marlborough.

But habit, and the remains of partiality for the minister, who had delivered her from the control of the whigs, together with the natural indecision of the queen's temper, protracted his fall; and it was not till his sentence was passed by the courts of St. Germain and Versailles, that she consented to remove him from her service. * Those courts finding that Oxford constantly eluded their demands for a restoration, and deceived them by repeated promises, which were never fulfilled, made lord Bolingbroke the agent of their schemes, and the channel of their communications, and hoped, through his ministry, to gain the grand object of their wishes. We learn, from the authentic testimony of Berwick, who managed the secret correspondence with the Stuart party, that this was the real cause of Oxford's removal, and that his disgrace excited the most sanguine hopes of success.

* We do not hesitate to assert this fact, because it is evident from the declarations of the duke of Berwick, who gives a long detail of the secret correspondence which Oxford maintained with him through the agency of Gualtier and Torcy, and the mode in which the wily treasurer duped the court of St. Germain. He also developes the plan which they pursued to obtain his removal, and informs us that the wishes of the exiled family were imparted to the queen, through the duke of Ormond and lady Masham, who being at this time both intimately connected with Bolingbroke, we cannot doubt his participation. Memoires de Berwick, t. ii. 196—206.

After many struggles in the mind of the queen, she resumed the white staff on the 27th of July. An indecorous altercation took place in her presence between the two rivals for power, in which the treasurer coarsely observed, amidst many other reproachful expressions, that he would leave some people as low as he found them. The feelings of the queen were deeply affected with this disgraceful scene, which continued until two in the morning; and she retired in a state of extreme agitation, without announcing any other ministerial arrangement.

From this moment Bolingbroke was considered as virtually the prime minister, and as the person who was to organise the new administration. His first measure was calculated to cajole the whigs and moderate tories. On the ensuing day, he gave a political dinner to Stanhope, Walpole, and other members of the hanoverian party, and lavished assurances, that he would promote the protestant succession. But when the whigs demanded, as a pledge of his sincerity, that the pretender should be removed from Loraine, he frankly declared his inability to obtain the consent of the queen, to what she deemed the banishment of her brother.* Meanwhile, he gave his whole confidence to the jacobites, and laboured to form an administration in which they were to be predominant. As far as we can ascertain, from the authentic writings of the day, the great official situations were to be thus filled. The treasury

* Memoires of Sir Robert Walpole, chap. 8.

was to be put into commission, at the head of which was Sir William Wyndham; Bolingbroke himself was to retain the seals as secretary of state, with the sole management of the foreign correspondence; Bromley was to continue his colleague; the earl of Mar secretary of state for Scotland; the duke of Ormond commander-in-chief; lord Harcourt chancellor; the duke of Buckingham lord president of the council; the earl of Strafford head of the board of Admiralty, and the privy seal was to be transferred to Atterbury, bishop of Rochester. * Measures were also continued for re-modelling the army, and securing possession of the forts, arsenals, and outports.

Such an administration being completely jacobite in its constituent parts, no doubt can remain as to the ultimate object. Fortunately, however, this arrangement never took place. On the 29th, the agitation of the queen's mind having increased, the imposthume in her leg was suddenly checked. Her constitutional gout flew to her brain, and she sunk into a state of stupefaction, broken by occasional fits of delirium.

Bolingbroke employed this awful interval of suspense in accelerating his political arrangements; and the most alarming apprehensions seized upon all the well-wishers to the protestant succession. The whigs, however, were not inactive. They had already entered into a formal association,

* Almost all the members of this projected administration were avowed jacobites. Three, including Bolingbroke, followed the pretender; one, the bishop of Rochester, was attainted; and Sir William Wyndham was arrested in 1715, as a favourer of the rebellion.

nominated officers, collected arms and ammunition, enregistered troops, and were preparing to take the necessary precautions on the demise of the queen, to obtain possession of the fortresses and outports of the kingdom, to seize the Tower, and to adopt every possible precaution for proclaiming the constitutional king. By the agency of Marlborough, they were also secure of the powerful garrison stationed at Dunkirk, and expected his arrival with impatience, as the means of influencing the army.

In the midst of these mutual exertions, the indisposition of the queen increased; and a committee of the privy-council were sitting in a chamber of the royal palace of Kensington, to make the most prompt and effectual arrangements on the expected event.

Fortunately, among the members present, was the duke of Shrewsbury, who, by his patriotic conduct at this awful moment, compensated for his past duplicity. In his embassy at Paris, and in his office of lord-lieutenant of Ireland, he had not co-operated with the views of the jacobites, but had proved himself an active friend to the protestant cause. In the quarrels between the rival ministers, he had acted with his characteristic indecision, but adhered in general to Oxford, whom he justly considered as the least dangerous of the two. He now saw that the crisis was arrived for adopting a decisive line of conduct.

We have no precise information on the subjects which occupied the attention of the committee; but the members were confounded by the firmness

and promptitude of the hanoverian party. In the midst of their discussion, the dukes of Argyle and Somerset suddenly entered the council-chamber, and said, that understanding the danger of the queen, they had hastened to offer their assistance. In the pause of surprise which ensued, the duke of Shrewsbury rose, and thanked them for their offer. Having taken their seats, they proposed an examination of the physicians; and on their report, that the queen was in imminent danger, it was resolved that the post of lord treasurer should be filled without delay, and that the duke of Shrewsbury should be recommended to the queen. Bolingbroke and his partisans were thunderstruck, and made no opposition; and, with the approbation of the physicians, a deputation of the members waited upon her majesty, and declared the unanimous opinion of the council. The queen, who was incapable of exertion, faintly approving the choice, delivered the staff to Shrewsbury, and bade him use it for the good of her people. The same afternoon, lord Somers shook off his bodily infirmities, and repaired to Kensington. He was accompanied or followed by several privy-counsellors of the same party; and by their impulse a sudden revulsion took place in the counsels of government. Troops were ordered to march to the metropolis; ten battalions were recalled from Flanders; an embargo was laid on the ports; a fleet sent to sea under the command of the earl of Berkeley, and strong measures adopted to maintain the public tranquillity in every part of the kingdom.

A request was also sent to the States, to guaranty

the protestant succession, and an express dispatched to the elector of Hanover, entreating him to repair without delay to Holland, where a fleet would be ready to convey him to England, should it please God to call the queen to his mercy!

The queen having relapsed into a lethargy, and the physicians despairing of her life, the heralds at arms, and a troop of the life-guards, were then summoned on duty; and by these and other judicious exertions, the death of the sovereign, which happened at seven in the morning of the first of August, was instantly followed by the proclamation of the elector of Hanover as king, under the title of George I. Thus, by the blessing of divine Providence, the protestant succession was secured. *

This aspect of unanimity confounded all the enemies to the protestant succession. The king of France, however inclined to favour the restoration of the Stuart line, was too prudent to resist the torrent of the national will; the pretender, bereft of assistance abroad, and deriving no aid from his dismayed friends at home, remained a passive witness of his own defeat, and the elevation of his rival.

From the increasing divisions between the two ministers, and the violence of their respective adherents, a change in the cabinet had been long anticipated. It was natural, therefore, that Marl-

* Boyer's Queen Anne; — Political State; — Continuation of Rapin; — Swift's Memoirs relating to the Change of the Queen's Ministry; and Inquiry into the Behaviour of the Queen's last Ministry; — Letters of Charles Ford and Erasmus Lewis to Dr. Swift; — Bolingbroke's Correspondence; — Macpherson's Stuart and Hanover Papers, *passim*; — Memoires de Berwick and Torci.

borough should be anxious to be present at the expected crisis; and he was strongly exhorted by his friends in England to accelerate his return. Oppressed by the weight of age and increasing infirmities, he waited only till the parliament was prorogued, to commence his journey, and declared his resolution to brave again the persecutions he had already endured, for the gratification of revisiting his native land.

He gave notice of his design to prince Eugene, and imparted it to his friends in England. As early as April, his wife, in her extensive correspondence, announced, with heartfelt satisfaction, that they should speedily return to their country, declaring with a spirit of national enthusiasm, that she would rather die in a cottage in England, than reside in a palace abroad.

To the elector he thus announced his purpose, in a letter to Robethon, dated June 18.

After expressing his concern for the death of the electress, he adds, " I have been wishing some time to hear how you parted with Mr. Harley, and whether there was any hope of the electoral prince going into England, which, I find, all the considerable men of both sides so earnestly desired, that they express a great deal of trouble at the disappointment. This is what my correspondents write the 29th, O. S., of May; and one thing more, which, I think, is diverting, that Mr. Auditor Harley gives into these complaints, and said, that if the electoral prince had immediately followed the demanding of the writ, it had, by this time, put an end to the jacobite ministers and

party. How sincere this is in my lord treasurer's brother, I believe you may be able to judge of as well as any body, by what he has written to your court; but this artifice, and a great many others of the same kind, shew that he thinks it of use to continue deluding people with such tricks, and pretending that he is for the succession in the house of Hanover; though, since he had the power, he never made one step that was not directly against it.

" Pray be pleased to take an opportunity of acquainting his electoral highness, that my best friends think my being in England may be of much more use to the service, than my continuing abroad, upon which, I design to return as soon as the parliament is up; and being very desirous of receiving the elector's commands, I have already written to M. Bothmar, to meet me at Mordick, which may easily be done without being known to any body. I shall not leave this place till the beginning of the next month."

He accordingly took his departure from Antwerp, and repaired to Ostend for the purpose of embarking. While he was detained by contrary winds, the duchess imparted to her correspondent, Mrs. Clayton *, an interesting account of his journey.

* Mrs. Clayton was wife of Robert Clayton, esq., who held an official situation in the treasury, and was one of the managers of the duke's estates during his absence. After the accession of George I., the duchess procured for her friend, through the influence of baron Bothmar, the place of woman of the bedchamber to the princess of Wales. In this situation she conciliated the favour of her royal mistress, and

" *Ostend, Monday morning, July* 30. 1714. — I am sure my dear friend will be glad to hear that we are come well to this place, where we wait for a fair wind, and, in the mean time, are in a very clean house, and have every thing good but water. 'Tis not to be told, in this letter, the respect and affection shewn to the duke of Marlborough, in every place where he goes, which always makes me remember our governors in the manner that is natural to do; and, upon this journey, one thing has happened that was surprising and very pretty. The duke of Marlborough contrived it so as to avoid going into the great towns, as much as he could, and for that reason went a little out of the way, not to go through Ghent; but the chief magistrates hearing where he was to pass, met him upon the road, and had prepared a very handsome breakfast, for all that was with us, in a little village, where one of their ladies stayed to do the honours; and there was in the company a considerable churchman that was lame, and had not been out of his room in a great while, but would give himself this trouble. This is to shew you how the Roman catholics in these countries love those that have served them well. Among the governors of that town, there were a great many officers that came out with them a foot; and I was so much surprised and touched at their kindness, that I could not speak to the officers without a good deal

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obtained great influence in the succeeding reign. Her husband was created lord Sundon, and she became the great favourite of queen Caroline. — See Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, *passim*.

of concern, saying I was sorry for what they did, fearing it might hurt them; to which they replied very politicly or ignorantly, I don't know which, sure it was not possible for them to suffer for having done their duty. The next day Mr. Sutton met us, with other officers, and did a great many civilities in bringing wine, and very good fruit; but I was not so much surprised at that, because he is so well with the ministers, that he may do what he pleases. The duke of Marlborough is determined to stay here till he has a very fair wind and good weather, and not to be at London till three or four days after he lands at Dover, because we have so many horses and servants, that we can't travel fast. I long to embrace my dear Mrs. Clayton, and I hope I shall never part from her again for any long time, tho' I have as ill an opinion of public affairs as ever, but I would fain end my life in England with my friends, if I can, and must submit to popery or any thing that cannot be helped. My humble service to Mr. Clayton, and to every body that you think cares to hear of me."

Meanwhile the friends of the illustrious exile in England made preparations for his reception; and his approaching arrival was hailed by the whigs, and all who were favourable to the house of Hanover, as the consummation of their hopes, while the jacobites contemplated his coming with dismay.

The political conduct of Marlborough during his abode on the continent, and the motives for his return to England being thus clearly ascertained, it may seem unnecessary to vindicate him from various aspersions, which, although incon-

sistent with each other, have been cast on his memory, and repeatedly asserted, until they have assumed the colour of truth. Thus he has been accused of caballing, at the same time, with Oxford and Bolingbroke; and the old slander has been revived, of his treasonable correspondence with the Stuart line. That he was not inclined to favour the pretender is evident, from the violence with which he was assailed by the jacobites, who considered him as the bitterest enemy of their cause. One of their principal leaders, alluding to the supposed reconciliation between him and Bolingbroke, candidly allows that, "In that event, it is more than probable, that all the lord Bolingbroke's designs for the king (the pretender), would have been dropped, and *other schemes* laid down and pursued." He likewise mentions a report, that the duke refused the loan of £100,000, which the pretender demanded as the pledge of his fidelity. *

A single paragraph, in a secret letter from Prior to Bolingbroke, will sufficiently disprove the malicious but unfounded rumour, that he was acting, in concurrence with France and the pretender, to overturn the settlement of the succession. "*Aug.* 7. 1714. M. de Torcy has very severe, and, I fear, very exact accounts of us; *we are all frightened out of our wits*, upon the duke of Marlborough's going to England." † In regard to his cabals with Bolingbroke, which seem to be too generally credited, we may contradict the accusation, on the indeniable testimony of the secre-

* Lockhart's Memoirs, vol. i. p. 461.

† Correspondence, vol. iv. p. 579.

tary himself. In a letter to lord Strafford, dated July 14, he observes, "Lord Marlborough's people give out that he is coming over, and I take it for granted he is so; whether on account of the ill figure he makes on the continent, or the good one he hopes to make at home, I shall not determine. But I have reason to think that some people *, who would rather move heaven and earth, than part with their power, or make a right use of it, have lately made overtures to him, and have entered into some degree of concert with his creatures. My dear lord, the queen's affairs are in a deplorable condition." In the bitterness of his anger, Bolingbroke also preferred an accusation to the queen against the treasurer, for his cabals with the duke of Marlborough, and adduced this supposed intercourse, as a motive for depriving him of the white staff.

The tale of his cabals with Oxford rests on no firmer foundation.

We have already stated that he was indebted to Oxford for his passport. This transaction, however, did not produce the smallest degree of reconciliation, for the correspondence of Marlborough evidently proves his rooted aversion to the treasurer; and the latter, in a conversation with lord Cowper, in 1712, cast the most injurious reflections on the disgraced general, accusing him of encouraging the emperor to give an archduchess to the pretender, and boasting that he had intercepted several letters to him, from the dukes of Berwick and Orleans, which proved a treasonable

* Meaning lord Oxford.

correspondence with the Stuarts. A partial renewal of their intercourse, however, occurred in the latter end of 1713, when Oxford announced to the duke, in a friendly letter, the royal warrant for £10,000 to carry on the works of Blenheim. This favour the duchess justly attributes to the indisposition of the queen, which induced the treasurer to conciliate the duke, with the hope that if the elector of Hanover should succeed, he might derive some benefit from his interposition. But this gleam of returning harmony soon disappeared; and the treasurer laboured during the mission of his relative, Mr. Harley, to the court of Hanover, to alienate the elector from the duke, by exciting suspicions of his fidelity, and exaggerating his intercourse with the dethroned family. From this period to the death of Anne, we not only find no proofs of reconciliation, but in some mysterious letters from the duchess to Mrs. Clayton, we perceive traces of the inveterate enmity, which both she and her husband fostered against the two ministers, particularly against Oxford, till the moment of their embarkation. A few extracts will suffice to shew the style of the rest. *

"*Antwerp, Sept.* 13. *O. S.*, 1713.—I don't know what has been the occasion of the report of our coming to England, where I need not say I should

* Contrary to my usual custom, I have left the ciphers in the text without explanation, because I found no key, and may possibly in some instances be mistaken. I believe, however, the following explanation is correct:—7, the queen; 8, the electress Sophia; 9, electoral prince; 11, the pretender; 12, the pope; 17, lord Oxford; 18, lord Bolingbroke; 19, lord chancellor Harcourt; 56, lady Masham; 59, England; 88, the tories; 89, the whigs; 140, the king of France.

be very glad to be, and particularly to enjoy your agreeable conversation, but I can see no prospect; for though I think nobody is more reasonable, and judges better in most things than you, I can't find any ground to flatter myself that young 97 * will not be the same as the old, and for one reason or another will be governed by 11's friends, 12 and 17; and to hope only from chance, or that many will oppose 11 that will not oppose 17 and 36, is a very sandy foundation, and what will fail you at the last; thó' I believe the men of estates, and that have an interest in the security of their country, joined together, might make a good struggle in our defence, if they could be made sensible of the ruin that is coming upon us. But after so many excellent papers writ to no purpose, which all people must know is the truth, as that nothing was ever so wicked and scandalous as the present ministry; how can one imagine any thing can change the majority, when all I have mentioned has had no effect! I think 'tis much more probable that the best of 88 should be brought into the interest of 11, than that they should join to save their liberties with 89; and, not to tire you with my arguments, in short I think the whole world is given up to France; and I have it from too good hands, that as soon as the emperor can be forced into a peace, the prince of Wales is to come into England; and 'tis said in France that 7 will consent to it. Perhaps she is not yet acquainted with that part of it. But, however, when the

* The new parliament.

things are prepared for it, there can be no great difficulty in that, nor no great matter whether 7 likes it or not. Perhaps the king of France may be strong enough to place him upon the throne, without the consent of England; but if they take another way to do it, by parliament, to be sure there will be acts pass to quiet people, and to assure them that all things shall remain as they are; and is it more ridiculous to believe we shall be safe under the power of the king of France, and a Roman catholic prince, to govern under him, than what the majority of England have already done?"

"I have so few pleasures in this world * that I hope my dear friend will indulge me in one of my greatest, which is writing to you, tho' I have wrote to you three several ways lately, and have none of yours since my last. I can't help wishing for the next post more than ordinary, because I think it will bring an account of the house of commons; and if they are as sensible of the ruin that threatens, as the lords seem to be, I hope both together will think of some way to save us; 17 and 7 have wrote to 8 and 9† only to cheat; and one thing is very foolish, that 17 has not dated the letter, who is so formal in those things, that he would not fail that part, if he wrote only into his own street, to a tradesman. But I suppose the

* This letter is without date, but was probably written towards the end of April, 1714, because she alludes to the answer given by the queen, on the 8th–23d of April, to an address from the lords, to issue a proclamation for seizing the person of the pretender.

† The remark of the duchess is perfectly correct, for the letters of Oxford to the electoral family are without date.

reason of it is, that he would have it in his power, if these letters should be ever shewn to his prejudice, to say that they were wrote in some year, when he had not professed things so contrary to 11; and I am so very sure that 7, 36, 17, 18, 19, 20 *, and 110 *, and some others, are in that service, that I can't help suspecting sometimes, that there is no real difference between any of these figures, but that they think they serve some end by pretending to dislike one another. And 'tis to be apprehended that many may act contrary to reason, in hopes of being preferred to 17's post when 46 † and 47 † are gone, which I imagine is the language of 7 to such as they would make use of for a present turn. I was never much concerned for the disappointment of the honest people, concerning the words changed in the address for the proclamation, if the prince of Wales landed; and by a letter I had lately, I am yet more confirmed that I was in the right. For it appears to me, that the great struggle the ministers made to have that matter left to her majesty's own time, and then the queen answering that she did not think it necessary, must needs help to convince men, that can yet be in doubt of the mysterious designs, which is certainly the chief thing; for when the prince does really land, whatever the proclamations are of either side, those that conquer will do as they please; and, therefore, I think the first thing is, to make people see their danger all the ways that can be imagined."

* Possibly the duke of Ormond and Mr. Bromley.

† Probably the lords and commons: meaning when parliament is prorogued.

" *June* 24. *N. S. Saturday.* — Since my last to my dear Mrs. Clayton, I have received your kind letter of the first of this month, and, though I never doubt of any thing you write, I only fear that what relates to the queen will not come time enough to be of any service to 59. I have given you my opinion, in former letters, as to 89 and 59, and all I have to add upon that subject is, that I think there could be no doubt of 7 and 140 doing every thing that was wicked in that matter, and mischievous to 59. But that I suppose must be as well seen by those that desired 9 as by me; and for those 'tis reasonable to suppose that they thought they should have got 47 and 46 to be of 9's side, or else I don't see what advantage it could be of, had they obtained what was desired. Tho' by all that has yet appeared, the best argument that ever I could find for 9's waiting upon England * was, the prodigious fright 7 and 140 were in upon that subject; and whatever part 17 has had in that matter, or whatever his brother may say to divide, and to support himself against the ambition of 18, I am as sure that 17 is engaged to 11, and was so before 18 had any power, as I am of any thing that is past. And if 18 does get the better of 17, 'tis only because his way of serving 11 is more liked than 17, which is very natural for 11, 12, and all their entire friends to be fond of. But it will be only in the power of 36 to determine that matter beween 17 and 18, and all the concern I have in it is, to have that figure fall first, that is

* Journey of the electoral prince to England.

most likely to serve 59, by it, being very sure, as long as they work together, it will be for the interest of 11; and I am apt to think that if 17 were discarded, it would be of more service every way than to have 18 disappointed."

No farther evidence can surely be required to prove that, before his departure for the continent, Marlborough had entered into no compromise either with Oxford or Bolingbroke; and that he returned with a resolution to support that cause, for which he had fought and conquered, and for which he had braved persecution, and doomed himself to a voluntary exile.

CHAPTER 113.

1714—1715.

Departure of Marlborough from the continent.—Apprised of the queen's decease, and the quiet accession of George the first.—Lands at Dover.—Journey to London.—Disappointed at his exclusion from the regency.—Cavalcade on his entrance into the capital.—Takes the oaths and appears in parliament.—Retires to Holywell-house.—Visits Bath.—Pays his respects to the king on his landing at Greenwich.—Arrangement of a new administration.—Ascendancy of the whigs.—Marlborough made captain-general and master of the ordnance.—Promotes the impeachment of Oxford and Bolingbroke.—Combats a proposal in parliament for fixing the troops in particular stations, and dismissing foreign officers.—Pacifies the guards, who were dissatisfied with their clothing.

Labouring under the deepest anxiety at the lowering aspect of public affairs, Marlborough remained several days at Ostend. At length a change of wind enabled him to take his departure for his native shore. On approaching the coast near Dover, in the evening of the 1st of August, the vessel was boarded by a messenger from Sir Thomas Frankland, postmaster-general, who conveyed the important tidings of the queen's decease, and the quiet accession * of the new sovereign.

* We have ventured, in this account, to follow implicitly the narrative of the duchess, who must have been best acquainted with the circumstances attending their return. Boyer and other writers assert that they had a stormy passage, and were not apprised of the news of the queen's decease till the day following their arrival at Dover.

The feelings of the exiled chief may easily be conceived. Providence appeared to bless his return to the bosom of his friends and family. He no longer had to encounter unmerited persecution, no longer to bear the frowns of an offended sovereign, or to remain exposed to the calumnies and vengeance of party. He had reason to expect a return of sentiment in his misguided countrymen; and from the sovereign who was called to the throne, he anticipated the favours and distinction, which its preserver was entitled to claim.

The welcome which he experienced on his entrance into the harbour, was calculated to give strength to these grateful feelings. On the approach of the vessel, the thunder of artillery resounded from the platform; and as he landed, he was hailed with the shouts of exulting crowds. He was received by the mayor and jurats in all their formalities; and afterwards repaired to the hospitable mansion of his devoted friend, Sir Henry Furnese, from whence he had taken his departure for his voluntary exile.

On the following day he proceeded towards the capital, and passed the night at Sittingbourne. On the road, the elevated hopes he had conceived, were damped by the communications of colonel Graham, one of his former aides-de-camp, who imparted to him the list of lords justices; from which, to his mortification, he found his own name, and that of lord Sunderland, excluded.

He bore this unexpected slight with dignified calmness, and continued his journey. He purposed to enter the metropolis with his usual privacy;

but the zeal of his friends overcame his caution, and he consented to bear a part in the cavalcade prepared for his reception. On his approach to the suburbs, he was met by Sir Charles Cox, member for Southwark, at the head of 200 gentlemen on horseback; and as he advanced, the procession was joined by his family and friends, in a long train of carriages. With this escort he passed through the city, preceded by a volunteer company of the city grenadiers, and hailed with loud acclamations of "Long live king George! Long live the duke of Marlborough!"

At Temple Bar his carriage broke down, but without producing any serious injury; and he rode in another coach to his house in Pall Mall, where the grenadiers took their leave by firing a volley. The remainder of the evening was spent in receiving the congratulations of his family and friends. The ensuing morning, the 5th of August, he was visited by most of the foreign ministers, and many of the nobility, gentry, and officers of the army; and having been sworn of the privy council, by the lords justices, he appeared in the house of lords, which then first met for the transaction of business. He took the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, and, after the speech delivered by the lords justices, gave his approbation to the loyal address passed on the occasion. *

The parliament being prorogued till the 12th, he did not remain in town to take any farther share in public business; but withdrew to his

* Journals;—Boyer's Political State;—Lediard;—Tindal, vol. xviii. p. 511.

mansion of Holywell-house, with sentiments of chagrin and disappointment at the slight he had experienced in being excluded from the regency.

His dignified retirement awakened the hanoverian agents to a sense of their neglect. He was accordingly visited by Bothmar and his colleagues, who laboured to assuage his chagrin by their apologies, and ascribed the oversight to inadvertency, or to his absence from England. He accepted their excuses; but, at the instance of the duchess, adopted a resolution to hold no official situation under the new government. The fact is thus stated in her own words*: "I begged of the duke of Marlborough, upon my knees, that he would never accept of any employment. I said every body that liked the revolution and the security of the law had a great esteem for him; that he had a greater fortune than he wanted; and that a man who had had such success, with such an estate, would be of more use to any court, than they could be of to him: that I would live civilly with them, if they were so to me, but would never put it into the power of any king to use me ill. He was entirely of this opinion, and determined to quit all, and serve them only when he could act honestly, and do his country service at the same time. Any extraordinary pay as general, he quitted at first, there being an end of the war; so that he had only the empty name of it. And his other preferments were, master of the ordnance, and his regiment of guards, for which he had only

* Narrative of the duchess.

the settled allowances; and what he resolved to quit was of no consideration to him, added to his estate."

Having passed a few days at Holywell, he proceeded to Windsor Lodge, on his way to Bath, for the purpose of embracing his beloved daughter, lady Sunderland, who was seriously indisposed. Here he remained, till the period when George the first was expected in England, to take possession of his new sovereignty.

The interval between the death of Anne and the departure of the king from Hanover, was spent by all parties in vain conjectures, and with mingled hope and anxiety. The conduct of the new sovereign was well calculated to work on the feelings of all who aspired to office and distinction, and to give the two rival parties an equal interest in the maintenance of tranquillity. His arrival at the Hague disclosed his real views; for the whigs were gratified to find their zeal and attachment rewarded with his full confidence and favour. But although his decision evinced his predilection for the great champions of civil liberty, he displayed a jealousy of those chiefs, who, under the name of the junta, had directed the operations of the party, by confiding the powers of government to lord Townshend, who had hitherto acted in a subordinate sphere.

Before his arrival, that nobleman received the seals, which had been taken from lord Bolingbroke, and was intrusted with the arrangement of a new administration. On the 17th, he took possession of his office, and on the 18th the king gratified

his expectant subjects, by landing at Greenwich, in company with the electoral prince. Marlborough hastened from Bath, to join the vast concourse, who crowded to greet his arrival, and was received with peculiar marks of attention and cordiality. He likewise experienced the most flattering distinction from the heir-apparent, who was proud to recognise the illustrious hero, under whose banner he had reaped the first fruits of glory, at the battle of Oudenard. The duke attended the king on his solemn entry into the metropolis, and shared with his sovereign the acclamations of the populace.

While the whigs were flattered with peculiar marks of the royal attention, the leading members of the late administration were treated with equal neglect and scorn. The earl of Oxford was barely admitted to kiss the hand of his new master, but without the slightest notice; the duke of Ormond, who was hastening to Greenwich with a splendid retinue, was forbidden to appear in the royal presence; and lord Harcourt, who, as chancellor, had prepared the patent for the prince of Wales, was contemptuously dismissed.

The arrival of the king was followed by the choice of a new administration, which had been previously arranged by lord Townshend, in conjunction with his brother-in-law, Mr. Walpole, who, in like manner, was called from a subordinate character to the management of the house of commons, and the office of paymaster of the forces. General Stanhope was nominated the other secretary of state; lord Cowper, chancellor; lord

Wharton, who was raised to the dignity of marquess, privy seal; the duke of Shrewsbury was retained in his post of lord chamberlain; the duke of Somerset constituted master of the horse; and the duke of Devonshire lord high steward. The admiralty and treasury were both put in commission; the first under the earl of Orford, and the last under lord Halifax, who was created an earl, honoured with the garter, and permitted to resign, in favour of his nephew, the lucrative post of auditor of the exchequer, which was incompatible with his new office. The lord lieutenancy of Ireland was conferred on lord Sunderland. The posts of government were successively filled by the same party; and the only tory admitted to a share of power, was Nottingham, who, in reward for his late alliance with the whigs, was restored to his former situation of president of the council.

Few who are accustomed to power are willing to forego its enjoyment; and, therefore, we are not surprised to find Marlborough forgetting his late resolution, and yielding to the persuasions of Sunderland and his other friends, in resuming his former offices of captain-general and master of the ordnance. He was also gratified by the appointment of his sons-in-law, lord Godolphin to the post of cofferer of the household, and the earl of Bridgewater to that of lord chamberlain to the prince's household. The duke of Montagu, another son-in-law, was rewarded with a regiment, and a company in the first regiment of guards; and the duchess, his daughter, was soon afterwards

appointed lady of the bed-chamber to the princess of Wales.

But although our great commander was thus distinguished with honours and emoluments, he was reduced to the shadow of his former authority; for he was admitted to little share in the government of the state, and confined to the routine of his official stations. He deeply felt also the total exclusion of the moderate tories, with whom he had been once identified in principle, and whose zeal and services in support of the protestant succession he duly appreciated. Nor was he less chagrined at the exclusion of his son-in-law, lord Sunderland, from the primary departments of state, and his appointment to the viceroyalty of Ireland, which was considered as a species of honourable banishment.

The same tranquillity which had marked the change of sovereigns in England, was experienced in Scotland and Ireland; and in both countries the offices of government were transferred to the favoured party. The seals of secretary of state for Scotland were taken from the earl of Mar, and given to the duke of Montrose, who had signalised his zeal in favour of the whigs; and the office of commander-in-chief was vested in the duke of Argyle, who had successfully combated the intrigues of Bolingbroke. In Ireland, Sir Constantine Phipps and the archbishop of Armagh were removed from the posts of lords justices, and replaced by friends to the protestant interest; a new privy council was formed, and the high office of chancellor was consigned to Alan Brodrick, one

of the ablest and most honourable of the whig party, who was intrusted with the chief authority of government. *

The parliament was dissolved as soon as the arrangements of administration were matured; and the popular sentiment reverting from the tories to the whigs, gave them an entire ascendancy in the new elections. The remainder of the autumn and winter having been judiciously employed in strengthening the government at home, and in endeavouring to renew the political system abroad, the legislature was called to resume its functions on the 17th of March, 1714–15. The whigs raised Mr. Spencer Compton to the speaker's chair; and the proceedings were opened on the 21st with a speech from the throne, adapted to the circumstances of the times, and breathing the sentiments of the whigs.

After approving the zeal, which all classes had manifested in defence of the protestant succession, the king stated that many essential conditions of the late peace were not duly performed, and urged the necessity of defensive alliances to ensure its execution. He observed, that the pretender boasted of the assistance which he expected from his partisans in England, that he was still permitted to reside in Loraine, that the trade of the nation was injured, and the public debts increased. He concluded with professing his resolution to make the established constitution, in church and state, the rule

* He was soon afterwards created baron Brodrick, and is better known under his subsequent title of viscount Middleton.— See Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, *passim*.

of his government, and to devote the chief care of his life to the happiness, ease, and prosperity of his people.

The addresses prepared by the whigs were vigorously opposed by the members and favourers of the late administration, who considered the style of the speech as indicative of an attack against themselves; but their opposition only roused the spirit of the ruling party. Both houses testified the most heartfelt gratitude to Providence, for having raised his majesty to the throne at this critical conjuncture. Both expressed hopes that, assisted by the zeal of parliament, he would recover the reputation of the kingdom in foreign parts, and declared that they would convince the world by their actions, that the loss of honour was not to be imputed to the nation in general. Both trusted in his majesty's wisdom and energy to secure the fulfilment of the treaties, to alleviate their debts, to preserve public credit, and restore trade. But the address of the commons was peculiarly energetic; they professed that no care on their part should be wanting to enquire into the cause of the late fatal miscarriages, and observed, "we are sensibly touched, not only with the disappointment, but the reproach brought upon the nation, by the unsuitable conclusion of a war, which was carried on at so vast an expence, and was attended with such unparalleled successes; but as that dishonour cannot in justice be imputed to the whole nation, so we firmly hope and believe, that through your majesty's great wisdom, and the faithful endeavours of your commons, the repu-

tation of your kingdoms will in due time be vindicated and restored."

In a subsequent part of the address, the commons evinced a determination not to overlook the dishonourable conduct of the late administration, adding, " it is with just resentment we observe that the pretender still lives in Loraine, and that he has the presumption, by declarations from thence, to stir up your majesty's subjects to rebellion. But that which raises the utmost indignation of your commons is, that it appears therein, that his hopes were built upon the measures that had been taken for some time past in Great Britain. It shall be our business to trace out those measures, whereon he places his hopes, and to bring the authors of them to condign punishment."

Marlborough was too deeply affected with the degradation of the national honour, and the danger to which the liberties and constitution of England had been exposed, by the conduct of the late ministers, not to approve the resolution expressed in this address, to call them to account. Accordingly, both himself and his adherents joined in the impeachments of Oxford and Bolingbroke, who were the principal authors of the late dishonourable peace, and the no less dishonourable measures adopted in its progress.

Bolingbroke and Ormond fled from the justice of their country; and having evinced their guilt, by publicly entering into the service of the pretender, were outlawed and attainted. Oxford more manfully awaited his fate, and, in consequence of a vote of impeachment, was committed

to the Tower. The particulars of this celebrated process belong to the province of the national historian, and, therefore, we shall merely observe that the duke of Marlborough was present in the house of peers, at the different decisions passed on this occasion, and gave his vote in support of the heads of accusation, though he took no share in the debates.

We shall now, therefore, confine ourselves principally to those events and circumstances in which Marlborough was personally or officially concerned. As captain-general, he had speedily an occasion to employ his judicious and well-timed interference.

On the 24th of May, 1715, a clause was proposed in the house of peers, to be inserted in the bill for the regulation of the land forces, then under discussion, the purport of which was, to confine the regiments to their stations in every part of the british dominions. It was warmly supported by the duke of Buckingham, lord Trevor, lord North and Grey, and by the bishop of Rochester, all of whom were friendly to the pretender's interest. The duke of Marlborough, on the other hand, exposed, with great warmth and ability, the insidiousness and impolicy of this restriction, in case of an invasion or insurrection. He enlarged on the dangers which would ensue, should the foreign invaders or the insurgents be superior in number to the troops quartered on any particular spot, while others remained useless in distant and peaceable stations; and justly observed, " his majesty having trusted his royal person and family entirely into the hands of the nation, and, at the opening

of the session told the parliament that *what they should judge necessary for their safety, he should think sufficient for his own, we cannot do less for his majesty* than to leave to his great wisdom and direction, the disposal of the few troops that are kept on foot."

His opinion, strengthened by the weight of long experience and military skill, prevailed with the house, and the clause was rejected without a division.

He combated also, with no less firmness than ability, another clause, which, under the semblance of national predilection, deeply affected the honour of the country, and the interest of the army. A motion being made to exclude all foreign officers from the british service, Marlborough spoke with peculiar energy against so impolitic a measure. "Thus to cashier," he exclaimed, "officers, particularly french refugees, whose intrepidity and skill I have often experienced, many of whom have served during twenty-five years with disinterested zeal and unblemished fidelity, would be the height of ingratitude, and an act of injustice, unparalleled even among the most barbarous nations." His arguments had their due effect, and he had again the satisfaction to find his opinion approved and sanctioned.

But while he thus exerted his patriotic efforts for the welfare of the army, he was exposed to a malicious imputation, no less frivolous in itself, than unjustly grounded.

The accession of a foreign sovereign, unacquainted with our language and manners, and sur-

rounded with crowds of needy adherents, was likely to call forth those popular prejudices, which form a leading feature in the character of the british nation. In such circumstances, trifling grievances, which would otherwise pass unnoticed, or be speedily remedied, contributed to excite the most serious dissatisfaction; and the public feeling was strikingly manifested on the king's birthday, and on the anniversary of the Restoration, when crowds of all descriptions assembled in the streets.

Instigated by jacobite or disaffected leaders, the giddy populace tumultuously collected in different parts of the town, shouting, "Ormond and high church for ever! Down with the Hanover rats!" Their example readily spread to the guards, who were offended by the frauds of the contractors for furnishing their clothing, which was defective both in quantity and quality. Some threw their shirts into the gardens of St. James's Palace and of Marlborough House; and a detachment of the very regiment of which he was colonel, in their way to the Tower, publicly exposed their coarse and scanty garments, exclaiming, "These are Hanover shirts!" The captain-general felt the danger of alienating the force, which was intrusted with the duty of defending the royal person, and preserving the tranquillity of the capital. The clothing having been examined, and the complaints of the soldiers appearing justly founded, he instantly directed the obnoxious shirts to be burnt, and ordered a double supply, both of shirts and jackets, of superior quality, to be prepared.

On the 2d of June he reviewed his own regiment of guards; and, at the close of the evolutions, thus addressed them: —

"Gentlemen; — I am much concerned to find your complaints so just, about the ill state of your clothes. I take this opportunity to tell you, that I am wholly innocent of this grievance; and, depend upon it, no application shall be wanting on my part, to trace out the measures that have been taken, to abuse you and me. I am resolved nothing shall divert me from demanding forthwith satisfaction, (wherever it may happen to fall,) and shall think nothing too much, on my part, for your great services. I have ordered you a new set of clothing, such as will be every way becoming his majesty's first regiment of foot-guards. I desire you will return these, and take your old, till such time as the new can be completed, which, I give you my word, shall be as soon as possible. I have had the honour to serve with some of you a great many campaigns, and believe you will do me the justice to tell the world, that I never willingly wronged any of you; and if I can be serviceable to any (the least) of you, you may readily command it, and I shall be glad of any opportunity for that purpose. I hope I shall now leave you good subjects to the best of kings, and every way entirely satisfied."

This address, seconded by a liberal donation of beer, obliterated the memory of all grievances; and the troops hastened to testify their returning sense of duty, by uniting in their acclamations,

the names of George the first, and the duke of Marlborough. *

We quit incidents, which, though trifling, might have been attended with the most serious consequences, to turn our view to events more suited to the fame and character of our illustrious hero.

* Lediard, vol. iii. p. 391—394.

CHAPTER 114.

1715—1716.

Ill effects of the peace on the domestic affairs of England. — Mischiefs derived from the residence of the pretender in Loraine. — Rising disaffection towards the new government. — Projects and hopes of the Jacobites. — Evasion of the earl of Mar. — Commencement of the rebellion in Scotland. — Commotions and conspiracies in England. — Vigorous measures of the ministry. — Judicious arrangements of Marlborough as commander-in-chief. — Loyalty of parliament. — Arrest of Sir William Windham, and other suspected persons. — Duke of Argyle entrusted with the command in Scotland. — Operations against the rebels. —Battle of Dumblain.—Capitulation of Preston.—Death of Louis the fourteenth. — Appearance of the pretender in Scotland. — His progress and transactions at Scone and Perth. — Proclaimed king. — Lukewarmness of Argyle. — Junction of 6000 dutch auxiliaries, under the command of general Cadogan. — Offensive operations. — Retreat of the rebels. — Escape of the pretender, and dispersion of his followers. — Recall of Argyle. — Elevation of Cadogan to the peerage.

The ill effects derived from the late dishonourable peace were still more deeply felt by England in its domestic, than in its foreign relations. The most prominent was, the residence of the pretender in Loraine, where he could avail himself of the connivance, if not the assistance of the king of France,

and excite the flame of insurrection among his adherents in the british dominions, as well as among the parties disaffected to the new government.

The exclusion of the tories from the principal offices of state, and the severity, however just, which was exercised towards the members of the late administration, created great discontents, which were exaggerated by the reports of jacobite agents and spies; and the most sanguine hopes were entertained of overturning the new order of succession.

These hopes were not overlooked at the court of Versailles. Notwithstanding all his solemn promises, and the perils from which he had almost miraculously escaped, Louis was too much interested in fomenting civil convulsions, in the territories of his most dangerous neighbour, not to connive at the designs of the pretender. He supplied him secretly with sums of money, and permitted him to prepare a small armament, in the port of Havre de Grace, which was equipped under a feigned name. Bolingbroke and Ormond, corresponding with the malcontents in England, gave spirit and energy to the hitherto inert mass; and a simultaneous rising was planned in different counties. But it was in Scotland, where the germ of discontent most rapidly sprung into maturity, and where the adherents of the Stuarts waited only for the signal, to raise the standard of insurrection.

The prime agent in the first overt act, was the celebrated earl of Mar. At the death of queen Anne, this nobleman made great professions of loyalty to the new sovereign, and took the usual

oaths of allegiance; but being dissatisfied with his exclusion from all share in the administration of affairs, he embarked on the 8th of August at Gravesend, with major-general Hamilton and colonel Hay, on board of a collier; and, after landing at Newcastle, sailed in another vessel to Elie, in Fifeshire. Having collected in the neighbouring districts a few hundred followers, and being joined by several noblemen and lairds, he raised the standard of rebellion at Brae-Mar; and, on the 6th of September, proclaimed James the third of England, and eighth of Scotland, at Castleton. The scottish clans flocking to his quarters, his desultory forces, before the end of the month, amounted to 10,000 men.

At the same time, a regular conspiracy was organised in various parts of England, which was fomented by many persons of eminence and distinction, among whom we particularly notice Sir William Windham, whose influence was unbounded in the western counties. The impulse was already given, and a vast body of malcontents waited only for the appearance of the duke of Ormond, to imitate the example of their brethren beyond the Tweed.

In the northern districts, the insurgents were, however, too impatient to remain tranquil till the conspiracy broke forth in the south; for the earl of Derwentwater and colonel Forster assembled a force, and proclaimed the pretender in Warkworth, Morpeth, and Alnwick. But they speedily felt the effects of their precipitation, and were compelled to retire to Hexham.

On the first intelligence of the pretender's plan for the invasion of the british dominions, the ministry acted with unusual vigour and alacrity, and the duke of Marlborough participated in their zeal. Horace Walpole was sent to join with general Cadogan, then minister at the Hague, in pressing the States to ratify the barrier treaty, and supply the contingent of 6000 men, stipulated in the article for the guaranty of the protestant succession. This application was successful; and Marlborough impatiently expected the disembarkation of Cadogan, with the promised succours, as the means of extinguishing the flames of rebellion.

The king having declared to parliament, that a rebellion was begun at home, and an invasion apprehended from abroad, both houses presented addresses, full of loyalty and zeal, and expressed a resolution to support with vigour his majesty's government against all foreign and domestic enemies. In conformity with these declarations, the parliament granted liberal supplies, suspended the habeas corpus act, empowered the king to secure suspected persons, and offered a reward of £100,000 for seizing the pretender, alive or dead. They voted also an augmentation of the sea and land forces, and established all necessary regulations for maintaining internal tranquillity, and resisting foreign invasion.

The ministers acted with no less vigour and decision; the spirit of loyalty manifested by the parliament, spread over the nation, and the projected insurrection was prevented. Persons of all ranks and distinctions were secured; and among

these we cannot omit to notice Sir William Windham, whose arrest was accompanied with peculiar circumstances. The proposal for his apprehension, with evident proofs of his guilt, being laid before the cabinet council, his father-in-law, the duke of Somerset, offered to become responsible for his conduct; but when his offers were rejected, and his son-in-law was committed to the Tower, the high-spirited peer gave vent to his chagrin, in such indignant terms, that he was removed from the office of master of the horse. * To this incident Marlborough alludes in two mysterious notes to the duchess, indicating his perfect approbation of the measure, as well as his unabated opposition to the projects of the pretender.

" *Monday*, 12 *o'clock*. — I have kept the bearer, in hopes that we might have heard from the duke of Argyle; but there is a letter come from Berwick, which says the rebels are marching towards Northumberland. If that be true, it must be that the duke of Argyle has not followed them.

" I hope in God things will turn more to our advantage than yours of last night apprehended. There will be sent an express this afternoon to Cadogan, for the hastening the dutch troops; but by what he writes to me, I fear he will not be able to embark them till this day se'nnight.

" I hope 5 † will some time this day carry the message for dismissing 11 (the duke of Somerset,) which at last was with difficulty resolved. * * *

* Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, chap. 11.

† Probably one of the secretaries of state, or perhaps the lord chamberlain.

" As Mr. Cadogan is in hopes of signing the barrier treaty this week, I have been very pressing with him, that he should come in person with the dutch troops, which will be a very great use to me, for he will be, upon all occasions, very useful."

" *Tuesday night.* —I find by yours of last night that you are desirous not to be here till Thursday. I am sure I shall always prefer your satisfaction before my own, so that I reckon you will not be here till Thursday. In the mean time, be easy in your mind, for our cause is so good, that Providence can't but be of our side. The business of 11 (the duke of Somerset) was this morning performed, so that the trouble of that matter is now at an end."

In adverting to the causes, which gave energy and support to the new government, we cannot omit the elevation of Mr. Walpole to the head of the treasury, which had been recently vacated by the death of lord Halifax, and the resignation of the earl of Carlisle, who found himself unequal to the management of so responsible an office, in this perilous crisis. This appointment was peculiarly grateful to Marlborough ; for he had himself been the earliest patron of Walpole, whose fidelity, discretion, and talents for business, he had long experienced. The confidence inspired by the principles and financial ability of the new minister produced the most gratifying effect. Every loyal member of the community contributed to supply the treasury with voluntary loans, and among those, who gave such proofs of public spirit, we

distinguish the duke of Marlborough, who, in this pressing exigence, raised on his own private credit, a considerable sum of money, in the space of a few hours. * We are happy, in this instance, to combine the names of Marlborough and Walpole, for their eminent services in support of a government, the overthrow of which would have introduced popery and arbitrary power.

Meanwhile the most vigorous and judicious arrangements were planned by government, for raising the civil force in every part of the country; and the commander-in-chief made a regular distribution of the troops, who were to act against the rebels. General Wightman, who commanded in the north, collected a small body of troops, and posted himself at Stirling Castle, to check the advance of the insurgents towards the south. Here he was ordered to remain, till he was joined by the duke of Argyle, who was intrusted with the direction of the whole military force in Scotland, and waited only for reinforcements to take the field. General Carpenter was dispatched to Northumberland, with a body of horse and foot; and general Willes, landing with four regiments from Ireland, took the route through Chester towards the north, for the purpose of awing the numerous malcontents in Lancashire, where a rising was hourly expected.

The appearance of general Carpenter in Northumberland tranquillised the county. He instantly marched, with 900 dragoons, against the

* Mentioned in a letter from lady Blayney to the late duchess of Marlborough.

rebels, and forced them to fall back towards Woller; but being there joined by a corps of 200 scottish horse, under lords Kenmuir, Carnworth, and Wintoun, who had already proclaimed the pretender, in different parts of Scotland, they again advanced to Kelso. Here they awaited with impatience the junction of a body of highlanders, under brigadier Mackintosh, who was detached by the earl of Mar, with 2500 men, to make a descent on the Lothians, and surprise Edinburgh. During these movements, the earl of Mar occupied the pass of the Tay, established his head-quarters at Perth, and, after securing the province of Fife, and the whole northern coast of the Firth of Forth, turned towards Stirling, with the evident purpose of co-operating with the insurgents, already powerful in the Lothians.

Meantime the duke of Argyle had joined the royal troops at Stirling, but was unable to muster more than 3500 men. With this limited force, however, he did not hesitate to encounter the insurgents, and a desultory engagement took place at Dumblain with 9000 of the rebels, led by the earl of Mar. Some partial advantages were gained on either side, with little bloodshed; though the conflict terminated in the precipitate retreat of the rebel general. Both parties claimed the victory; but Argyle maintained his position at Stirling, while the insurgents retired to Perth, expecting the arrival of the pretender, whose presence they were prepared to hail as the harbinger of success.

General Carpenter having thrown himself on the flank of the rebels stationed at Kelso, and menaced

their communications with the interior, it became necessary to extricate themselves from their perilous position. In such a heterogeneous body, conflicting opinions naturally prevailed; and after much altercation and delay, it was decided by the majority, to evade the attacks of the british commander by suddenly marching into Lancashire, where they expected to be joined by numerous partisans. Many of the highlanders, however, refused to cross the border, and on the march to Jedburg and Baynton, deserted in vast numbers. The main body, still animated by a spirit superior to their diminished force, and buoyed up with hopes of reinforcements, penetrated into Cumberland, and advanced by Penrith and Kendal into Lancashire. Here they had the mortification to find that the gentry kept aloof, and were appalled by the intelligence, that the royal troops were assembling around them, in so great force, as to afford little hopes of escape. The astounded leaders, finding their numbers reduced to 1500, took post at Preston, where they intrenched themselves, and hoped that the strength of their position would enable them to maintain their ground, till they were joined by the northern hordes, or the malcontents from the south and west.

This was the very spot which Marlborough foretold would be the scene of their downfall, and the termination of their hopes. The arrangements previously made were now carried into effect; and while Argyle checked the movements of Mar, and secured the capital of Scotland, troops were dispatched from different quarters, to overwhelm this small, but desperate body, who had fallen into

the toils. General Carpenter rapidly followed them in their precipitate march; while general Willes no less rapidly advanced in the opposite direction.

The insurgents were confounded by these bold and vigorous movements, and overawed by the sudden accumulation of force. In the contentions naturally excited by the approach of danger, they neglected to guard the avenues which led to their position; and general Willes, to his surprise and satisfaction, advanced without opposition to the very precincts of Preston. After being repulsed on the 12th of November, in two vigorous attempts to penetrate into the town, he prudently suspended his attack; and on the ensuing day, was joined by general Carpenter with three regiments of dragoons. On this junction, the two generals invested the place; the brave, but misguided band of highlanders, proposed to cut their way through their opponents, or perish in the attempt; but this desperate resolution being over-ruled by their leaders, and a capitulation rejected, they surrendered at discretion. In this small body we find no less than 75 english and 143 scottish noblemen and gentlemen, who had taken arms against their sovereign. The utmost lenity was shewn to these misguided people; and, in contradiction to the tory historians, who charge the whigs with dyeing the royal ermines in blood, we observe that only three peers and twenty-six commoners paid the penalty of their treason. *

* Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, chap. xi.; — Narratives and Letters in the Gazette and Boyer's Political State; — Continuation of Rapin; — Lockhart's Papers, and other historical writings.

The suppression of the rebellion in Lancashire was soon followed by its extinction in Scotland.

At the very moment when the rebels had retreated to Perth, in hopes of maintaining themselves during the winter, and of advancing with an accumulated strength in the spring, they were confounded by intelligence of the capture of Inverness, the capital and key of the highlands. This enterprise was accomplished by Simon Frazer, afterwards so notorious under the title of lord Lovat, who, appearing suddenly before the fortress on the 10th of November, compelled lord Seaforth, the jacobite governor, to withdraw, after a blockade of only two days. The loss of this most important post was rendered doubly afflicting, because it was achieved by a chieftain, who had been hitherto considered as a most devoted adherent to the exiled family, and afterwards sacrificed his life in their cause.

Such reverses were aggravated by intelligence still more fatal, announcing the death of Louis XIV., who expired on the 16th of September. The succession of a minor, Louis, the struggles for the government, and the apprehensions of civil war, should Philip assert his pretensions to the regency, as presumptive heir by the legal order of succession, absorbed the attention of the french cabinet, and the cause of the pretender hung in suspense. From this series of disasters, it became a matter of deliberation among the jacobite chiefs, whether they should not furl the standard of rebellion and disperse to their respective homes.

They were, however, diverted from their resolution by the sudden arrival of the pretender.

Notwithstanding the gloomy aspect of affairs in his native country, and the loss of his royal patron, the gallant prince disdained to abandon an enterprise, on which his only hopes depended. He passed in disguise to Dunkirk, and, embarking on board a small vessel with lord Teignmouth, the son of marshal Berwick, and a few attendants, landed at Peterhead on the 22d of December. Passing with his suite *incognito* through Aberdeen, on the 27th he repaired to Fetterosse, the chief seat of the earl Mareschal*, and was hailed by him and the earl of Mar, in company with thirty noblemen and gentlemen of the first distinction. Being solemnly proclaimed king, he appointed the officers of his government and household, created peers, and conferred the orders of knighthood. On the 4th of January, he made his public entry into Dundee, accompanied by the two earls, and followed by a cavalcade of 300 gentlemen on horseback.

He proceeded to Scone, the ancient place of coronation for the kings of Scotland, and issued orders for preparing the ceremony of his own inauguration. After displaying his mock dignity at Perth, in a solemn entry on horseback, he returned

* Keith, hereditary earl marshal of Scotland, was at this period only twenty years of age; and, with the enthusiasm and levity of youth, had embraced the cause of the pretender at the persuasion of his mother, who was a catholic. In consequence of this disloyalty, he and his brother were driven into exile; and after finding a temporary protection from different princes of Europe, finally closed their days in the service of Frederick the second king of Prussia.

to Scone, where he began to exercise the functions of royalty: he issued six proclamations, in one of which, he summoned to his standard all his subjects capable of bearing arms, and, in another, fixed his coronation for the 23d. On the 16th he held a general council, at which the chiefs of the rebels were present, and delivered an animating speech to the assembled clans. The gracefulness of his person, the glowing energy of his language, the recollection of his misfortunes, the admiration excited by his courage, made a deep impression on hearts burning with loyalty and devotion to the blood of their native princes. The effect was heightened by the sublimity of mountain scenery, the romantic dress and arms of the highlands, and the solemn grandeur of the royal palace, which recalled to mind the splendid scenes of scottish glory. To a stranger, it would have appeared, as if a young and powerful monarch was in the act of ascending the throne of his ancestors, amidst the unanimous acclamations of a devoted people.

But this brief vision of royalty was the last gleam of his meteor-like sovereignty. Since the battle of Dumblain, the duke of Argyle had remained at Stirling, in a state of inaction, waiting for reinforcements, and a train of artillery; urging the necessity of suspending farther operations till the winter was past, and exaggerating the dangers of a highland campaign, in an inclement season, and with a scanty supply of provisions and forage. But the extinction of the rebellion in Lancashire, and the suppression of the seditious spirit in other parts of the kingdom, having given a large portion

of the royal troops a new opportunity for action, the ministry judiciously decided on crushing the insurgents yet in arms, before they could gather new strength. Artillery was ordered for immediate embarkation at London, and a train prepared at Berwick, while columns of troops from all quarters filed towards the north. But to no aid did Marlborough, as commander-in-chief, more anxiously look, than to that of the dutch auxiliaries, whose tried courage he had witnessed, and who were free from all local attachment, and contagion of party. He placed particular reliance, also, on the skill and spirit of his friend Cadogan, for whom he had procured the command of these forces, and whose activity and zeal were strongly contrasted with the temporising and lukewarm conduct of Argyle.

On joining the royal army, Cadogan found the duke of Argyle anxious to invent excuses for inaction, and labouring to discourage the troops, by exaggerating the numbers of the enemy, and the dangers and difficulties of the service. But the orders of the cabinet, and the instructions of the captain-general, enabled him to combat this procrastinating spirit. Impatient of delay, he hastened to Berwick to superintend the march of the train of artillery, and by his vigour and exertions the arrangements for the intended movements were speedily matured. Unusual efforts being made to clear the roads, the army began their march on the 29th of January. As they reached Tullibardine on the fourth day of their progress, they received the satisfactory intelligence, that this spirited advance had struck the rebels with consternation,

and that the ephemeral sovereign and his adherents had hastily withdrawn from Perth.

At this crisis, we find many interesting letters from Cadogan to the duke of Marlborough, describing the march, and contradicting the mischievous and discouraging reports of Argyle. In one of these, he draws a striking picture of the chagrin manifested by the scottish commander, at the success of an enterprise which he had represented as desperate.

" *Dundee, Feb.* 4. 1715–16. — My lord ; I still write one letter in french, that your grace, when you think proper, may shew it to the king.

" The duke of Argyle grows so intolerable uneasy, that it is almost impossible to live with him any longer ; he is enraged at the success of this expedition, though he and his creatures attribute to themselves the honour of it. When I brought him the news of the rebels being run from Perth, he seemed thunderstruck, and was so visibly concerned at it, that even the foreign officers that were in the room took notice of it. I find he now intends to stay, notwithstanding his declaring publicly at Stirling, that he would return to London, as soon as the business of Perth was over; he then, indeed, designed it, believing we should miscarry, and in order to have thrown the blame on me. Since the rebels quitting Perth, he has sent for five or six hundred of his Argyleshire men, who go before the army a day's march, to take possession of the towns the enemy have abandoned, and to plunder and destroy the country, which enrages our soldiers, who are forbid, under pain of death,

to take the value of a farthing, though out of the rebels' houses. Not one of these Argyle-men appeared whilst the rebels were in Perth, and when they might have been of some use."

This once formidable rebellion terminated in a manner unworthy of its commencement; for the insurgents being rapidly pursued by the royal army to Montrose, were deserted by their chief, who clandestinely embarked on board a french vessel, while his troops were amused with a military parade. The departure of the pretender was a signal for the retreat of the rebel host, who were not molested in their march, in consequence of Argyle's tardiness in pursuit; and after continuing their progress through Aberdeen, Strathspey, and Strathdown, under the direction of general Gordon, to the mountainous district of Badenoch, they dispersed, without any loss, to their respective homes in the highlands.

At length the inactive conduct of Argyle awakened the suspicions and indignation of government. He was recalled; and the sole command transferred to Cadogan. The eminent services of the english general were rewarded with a peerage; and, in expressing his grateful acknowledgments to his patron, the duke of Marlborough, he announces his certain conviction, that as he was now relieved from the controul of a superior, who obstructed the offensive operations of the army, and connived at the escape of the insurgents, the rebellion would be utterly extinguished in the short space of a month. *

* General Cadogan, to the duke of Marlborough, Aberdeen, Feb. 23.

This prediction of Cadogan was verified, and Scotland being tranquillised, he returned to London, to receive the approbation of his sovereign, and the congratulations of the noble patron to whom he owed his promotion. Thus Marlborough had the heartfelt satisfaction to contribute, by his own counsel and official exertions, as well as by the agency of his faithful friend and skilful pupil in the art of war, to the suppression of the rebellion, and to the establishment of the protestant line. *

* Letters from lord Cadogan to the duke of Marlborough ; — Narratives and Letters in the Gazettes, and Boyer's Political State ; — Continuation of Rapin, and other historical writers.

CHAPTER 115.

1716—1722.

Deaths of lady Bridgewater and lady Sunderland.—Character of lady Sunderland.—Her prayer and testamentary letter to her husband.—Correspondence on the occasion, between the duchess and lord Sunderland.—The duke of Marlborough attacked with the palsy.—State of his health and faculties.—Dissuaded from resigning his employments.—Conclusion of the trial of lord Oxford.—Causes of his acquittal.—South-sea project.—Sagacity of the duchess of Marlborough, in the midst of the public infatuation.—Her invectives against the ministry and the directors of the company.—Accused by lord Sunderland of furnishing money to the pretender.—Justifies herself to the king.—Death of lord Sunderland.

Marlborough had already sustained the misfortune to lose the most valued solace of declining age, by the successive deaths of his children at different periods.

Since the decease of his only surviving son, in the bloom of youth, the fond father had derived consolation from the happy establishment of his daughters in marriage, and the increase of his posterity. In 1714, however, he was afflicted with the loss of his third daughter, Elizabeth countess of Bridgewater, who died on the 22d of March, in the 26th year of her age. She was a woman of domestic virtues, imbued with a deep sense of

religion, and endeared to her husband and parents, by her mild, affectionate, and dutiful demeanor. He had scarcely recovered from this calamity, before he was visited by one still more severe. His second daughter, Anne countess of Sunderland, was endowed in the highest degree with personal and mental accomplishments. In beauty, she eclipsed most of her contemporaries; she combined the rare union of elevation of mind with humility, spirit with meekness, liveliness with discretion, and sound judgment with unassuming candour. She possessed an awful sense of religion, and exemplarily fulfilled all the duties of a daughter, a wife, and a mother.

After the return of the duke and duchess from the continent, she was the solace of her parents, and peculiarly beloved by her father; because she was the only one of his daughters who could submit to the controul, and conciliate the capricious temper of his consort. Her interposition had also abated the edge of that political asperity, which, in so froward an age, frequently interrupted the harmony of friends, and the peace of families.

This amiable woman had been long afflicted with a tedious disorder, which she bore with consummate fortitude, and christian piety. In this reduced state, her feeble frame could not resist the attack of a pleuritic fever, and, on the 15th of April, she sunk into the grave, in the 29th year of her age.

Her loss was deeply felt not only by her parents, who had so long experienced her endearing qualities, and affectionate attachment, but by her

husband, whose irascible temper she had softened, and whose propensity to extravagance and play she had often restrained. Indeed, nothing can convey a stronger picture of her merits and virtues, than a prayer, which she was accustomed to use, during the absence of her husband in his embassy at Vienna, and an affectionate letter delivered to him after her decease.

" O most gracious and merciful Lord God, whose kingdom ruleth over all, who art the hope of all the ends of the earth, and of them that remain on the broad sea, hear the voice of my prayer, now I cry unto thee, on the behalf of him who is dearest to me. O Lord, at all times, and in all places, bless, preserve, and keep him, both in body and soul, from all adversities which may happen to him. In all danger, and under every temptation, be thou still his Almighty Protector unto his life's end; more especially I beseech thee, at this time, to keep him in thy care, that no evil may befall him in the way that he goeth, but that he may be always in safety, under thy protection, from all perils, and return again in peace. O thou who commandest the winds and waves, and they obey thee, make them favourable to him in his voyages, both in his going out and coming in; conduct him safely into the haven where he would be. O Lord, in whose hands is the breath of all mankind, preserve that dear person in health and security, that no disorder from within, nor violence from without, may occasion pain and trouble to him; and when he is far off from me, let him find himself nigh unto thee, through the benefits of thy

saving presence and defence. O blessed Lord, I pray thee more especially for his sake, for those persons he leaves behind him, that no mischief may happen to them in this, that may occasion sorrow to him in a strange land; and let it be thy gracious will to prosper all his negotiations abroad, and make me, good Lord, thankful for these blessings; and grant we may live in love and peace together, till death shall make a yet longer separation; all which, in all humility of soul, I beg of thee in the name, and for the sake of Jesus my Saviour, *Amen*, O Blessed Lord, *Amen*, *Amen*."

The letter to her husband, which is no less interesting, is preserved in the hand of the amiable writer. *

"*Altrop, Sept.* 9. 1716.—I have always found it so tender a subject (to you, my dear,) to talk of my dying, that I have chose rather to leave my mind in writing, which, tho' very insignificant, is some ease to me. Your dear self, and the dear children, are my only concern in this world; I hope in God you will find comfort for the loss of a wife, I am sure you loved too well not to want a great deal. I would be no farther remembered than what will contribute to your ease, which is, to be careful (as I was) not to make your circumstances uneasy, by living beyond what you have, which I could not, with all the care that was possible, quite prevent. When you have any addition, think of your poor children, and that you have not an estate to live on, without making some addition,

* It is thus endorsed by the duchess: "A copy of what my dear daughter writ to her lord, not to be given him till after she was dead."

by saving. You will ever be miserable if you give way to the love of play. As to the children, pray get my mother, the duchess of Marlborough, to take care of the girls, and if I leave any boys too little to go to school; for to be left to servants is very bad for children, and a man can't take the care of little children that a woman can. For the love that she has for me, and the duty that I have ever shewed her, I hope she will do it, and be ever kind to you, who was dearer to me than my life. Pray take care to see the children married with a prospect of happiness, for in that you will shew your kindness to me; and never let them want education or money while they are young. My father has been so kind as to give my children fortunes, so that I hope they won't miss the opportunity of being settled in the world for want of portions. But your own daughter may want your help, which I hope you will think to give her, tho' it should straiten your income, or to any of mine, if they want it. Pray let Mr. Fourneaux get some good-natured man for lord Spencer's governor, whom he may settle with him before he dies, and be fit to go abroad with him. I beg of you to spare no expence to improve him, and to let him have an allowance for his pocket, to make him easy. You have had five thousand pounds of the money that you know was mine, which my mother gave me yearly; whenever you can, let him have the income of that for his allowance, if he has none any other way. And don't be as careless of the dear children as when you relied upon me to take care of them, but let them be

your care, tho' you should marry again; for your wife may wrong them, when you don't mind it. You owe Fanchon, by a bond, twelve hundred pounds, for which I gave her fourscore pounds a year interest. Pray, whenever it is in your power, be kind to her, and to her children, for she was ever faithful to me. Pray burn all my letters in town, or in the country. We must all die; but 'tis hard to part with one so much beloved, and in whom there was so much happiness, as you, my dearest, ever were to me. My last prayers shall be to the Lord Almighty, to give you all blessings in this world, and grant that we may meet happy in the next. A. Sunderland.

"Pray give lady Anne my diamond ear-rings; the middle drops are my mother's. And give Dye my pearl necklace and watch, and give lady Frances Spencer my diamond buckle. And give Mr. Fourneaux the medal of gold, which you gave me when I was married, and the little picture I have of yours and of lord Spencer's."

This affectionate and heart-rending appeal, lord Sunderland, in the first impulse of grief, sent by his steward to the duchess of Marlborough, from whom it drew a sympathising letter of condolence, expressive of her readiness to comply with her dear daughter's last request, which she religiously fulfilled.

"*May* 13. 1716.—I send you inclosed that most precious letter which you sent me yesterday by Mr. Charlton. You will easily believe it has made me drop a great many tears, and you may

be very sure, that to my life's end I shall observe very religiously all that my poor dear child desired. I was pleased to find that my own inclinations had led me to resolve upon doing every thing that she mentions, before I knew it was her request, except taking lady Anne, which I did not offer, thinking that since you take lady Frances * home, who is 18 years old, she would be better with you than me, as long as you live, with the servants that her dear mother had chose to put about her; and I found by Mr. Charlton this thought was the same that you had. But I will be of all the use that I can be to her, in every thing that she wants me; and if I should happen to live longer than you, tho' so much older, I will then take as much care of her as if she were my own child. I have resolved to take poor lady Anne Egerton †, who, I believe, is very ill looked after. She went yesterday to Ashridge, but I will send for her to St. Alban's, as soon as you will let me have dear lady Dye ‡; and while the weather is hot, I will keep them two and lady Harriot, with a little family of servants to look after them, and be there as much as I can; but the duke of Marlborough will be running up and down to several places this summer, where one can't carry children; and I don't think his health so good as to trust him by himself. I should be glad to talk to

* Lady Frances, his daughter by his first wife, lady Arabella Cavendish, daughter and co-heir of Henry Cavendish, duke of Newcastle. She afterwards married Henry Howard, earl of Carlisle.

† Daughter of Elizabeth, countess of Bridgewater.

‡ Lady Diana Spencer, second daughter of lord Sunderland, by his late deceased wife.

Mr. Fourneaux, to know what servants there is of my dear child's that you don't intend to keep, that if there is any of them that can be of use in this new addition to my family, I might take them for several reasons. I desire, when it is easy to you, that you will let me have some little trifle that my dear child used to wear in her pocket, or any other way; and I desire Fanchon will look for some little cup that she used to drink in. I had some of her hair not long since, that I asked her for; but Fanchon may give me a better lock at the full length."

Reply of Lord Sunderland. *

"*May* 13. — Nothing, dear madam, can ever express the sense I have of your tenderness and kindness, in the letter I had from you to-day, and in what Mr. Charlton had said to me from you before. I thought as soon as I found that precious dear letter, I ought in justice to send it to you, that you might see the desires of that dear, dear angel, and at the same time have the comfort and satisfaction of seeing, that out of your own tenderness and goodness, you had resolved to do all she desired in it, even before you had seen it. The tenderness expressed in that dear letter towards me, is a fresh instance of the greatness of my loss and misfortune. This is too moving to say more of it. I am the unhappiest man living; I feel it, and shall ever feel it. Poor little dear Dye shall come to you whenever you order it. Mr. Fourneaux will wait upon you with the names of what servants I shall part with; there are but two or three. I

* Indorsed by the duchess, "Lord Sunderland's letter in answer to mine, after my dear daughter died."

have not yet been able to look over the things the dear woman has left; as soon as I have, I will send those things you mention, and you will chuse what had rather. Fanchon will take care of the cup you desire, and the dear hair.

"I and mine shall never forget your goodness."

While the afflicted father continued in his retirement at Holywell House, brooding over the loss of his departed daughter, he was first attacked by that paralytic disorder, of which we trace a prognostic in the oppressive headaches and giddiness, so repeatedly alluded to in his correspondence.

He was seized on the 28th of May, with such violence, that he was deprived of speech and sense, but was speedily relieved by the medical aid of his devoted friend, Sir Samuel Garth, and partially recovered. On the 7th of July, he had sufficient strength to proceed to Bath, where he was recommended to drink the waters. As he approached the city on the 14th, he was met by a numerous cavalcade of the nobility and gentry, and was greeted by peals of bells and the acclamations of shouting multitudes. On his arrival, he received the congratulations of the mayor and aldermen, in their due formalities, accompanied with the most ardent wishes for the re-establishment of his health. Their hopes were, indeed, speedily accomplished; for on the 18th of October, he was sufficiently recovered to visit Blenheim, and expressed great satisfaction in the survey of a place, which reminded him of his great achievements, though the splendid edifice was yet too unfinished to offer much domestic accommodation. But this gleam

of returning health was of short duration; for, on the 10th of November, he was seized with a more severe attack of his paralytic disorder. He was visited by Sir Samuel Garth, and two other physicians; but his indisposition increasing, the alarm spread among his family, and his daughters and sons-in-law hastened to pay those duties, which they considered as their last, to their departing parent. The paroxysm, however, subsiding, his grace again speedily recovered his senses and health, and was conveyed without difficulty to Marlborough House in London. By these severe and successive attacks, he has been represented as reduced to a state of absolute debility, both of body and mind; and the duchess has been accused of leading her infirm and suffering husband into public view, and exposing to the gazing multitude so pitiful a spectacle of human imbecility. Even the language of the poet has been admitted into history, and the expression

"From Marlborough's eyes the streams of dotage flow*,"

has not only been received as truth, but as furnishing a striking subject of moral reflection. Nothing, however, is more false than this erroneous opinion, and the cruel aspersion to which it has given birth. The duke, indeed, lost, as is usual in such cases, the use of his speech, but afterwards recovered it, and conversed with little difficulty, though there were a few words which he could not distinctly articulate. He retained his memory and understanding little impaired; for he continued till

* Johnson's Translation of the tenth Satire of Juvenal.

six months before his death, attending his duty in parliament, and occasionally assisting in committees appointed to draw up addresses. * He likewise performed the functions of his offices of captain-general and master of the ordnance with his accustomed regularity.

He himself, indeed, conscious of his increasing infirmities, and feeling the decay of his powers, and the diminution of his activity, was desirous of retiring from business, and through lord Sunderland, tendered the resignation of his employments; but the king, with a due respect for his person, and a grateful recollection of his former services, refused to accept the offer, declaring that his retirement would excite as much pain as if a dagger should be plunged into his bosom. The duchess, however, was of opinion that her husband was persuaded to retain his situation by the intreaties of lord Sunderland †, who stood in need of his father-in-law's weight and influence to support him, and the ephemeral administration which he had recently formed, to the exclusion of Townshend, Walpole, and some of the principal whigs. But, whoever was the author, or whatever was the cause of his continuance in office, Marlborough had no reason to be satisfied with his compliance; for, from this period, he was a mere cypher, and exposed to repeated slights and mortifications even in his own departments.

Such being the condition of the illustrious hero,

* I trace in the Journals repeated proofs of his attendance in the house of peers till the 27th of November, 1721.

† Narrative of the duchess.

whose actions we have endeavoured to delineate, we may here consider his political career as drawing to a close, and forbear to enter into any detail of the complicated negotiations, and change of foreign policy, which by reconciling the rival powers of England and France, preserved, with little interruption, the peace of the continent, and gave to our country the blessing of a tranquillity, which it had not experienced since the Revolution. *

Nor is it more necessary to descant on the political feuds in the cabinet, and the schism among the whigs, which produced the temporary removal of Townshend, Walpole, and their adherents, and the formation of a new administration, under the auspices of Sunderland, who, in the successive posts of president of the council, secretary of state, and first lord of the treasury, was considered as the prime minister, and reigned paramount in the favour of the king; until the fatal explosion of the South Sea project transferred him from his official situation to that of groom of the stole.

Among the few public acts in which Marlborough, after his indisposition, took a peculiar interest, was the party struggle on the trial of the earl of Oxford. The accused peer had been detained two years in the Tower, although the articles of impeachment had already been carried through both houses. Among these were two, charging him with high treason, and others with high crimes and misdemeanors. The united body of whigs,

* For these transactions see the Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole; — History of the House of Austria; — History of the Kings of Spain of the House of Bourbon; — and the different native and foreign historians.

who had suffered so much from his administration, had originally resolved to carry on the impeachment, and hoped, even if they could not convict him on the primary, at least to prove him guilty of the secondary charges. Although he was supported by the tories and jacobites; yet his adversaries were too numerous and powerful to allow a probability of his complete acquittal. But fortunately for him, the recent schism of the whigs converted some of his most bitter enemies into secret partisans. These were the ministers lately dismissed from their offices, among whom we distinguish Walpole, the chairman of the committee, and the author of the secret report, and Townshend, the other leader of the party.

With a view of embarrassing the administration, and conciliating their new allies, this powerful body of malcontents joined the tories and jacobites to screen the impeached peer. After having so violently accused him, and drawn up the charges in such explicit and forcible terms, they could not act so inconsistently as to authorise a formal acquittal, and, therefore, they adroitly contrived to excite a dispute between the two houses of parliament, which they knew would produce the same effect.

For this purpose, the favourers of Oxford in the house of lords proposed to change the regular order of proceeding, by entering first on the charges of high treason, on which the evidence was most defective. The requisite motion was made in the house of peers by lord Harcourt, and supported by the tories and jacobites, as well as by the disaffected whigs, led by lord Townshend. It was

ably and warmly opposed by Sunderland, Cadogan, Coningsby, and the whole ministerial party. Marlborough was present at the debate, and gave his vote against the motion, which was, however, carried by a majority of 88 against 56.

The commons, as was expected, strenuously opposed the resolution as an infringement of their privileges; and several messages and altercations occurred between the houses, which served only to widen the breach. Both parties peremptorily persisted in their determination, and the lords rejected the proposal of a free conference, which was demanded by the commons. The matter was thus brought to the desired crisis; and the lords having appointed the 1st of July for the continuance of the trial, the commons determined not to maintain the prosecution, and adjourned to the third.

On the day appointed, the lords assembled in Westminster-hall, and as no prosecutor appeared, returned to the house. A motion was then made, that as no charge had been maintained against Robert earl of Oxford and Mortimer, he should be acquitted of high treason and other crimes and misdemeanors. This motion was strenuously opposed by Sunderland and the ministerial party; but an amendment for the omission of the words, "other crimes and misdemeanors," being negatived, it was carried by 106 against 38.

Having arranged the form of proceeding, the house adjourned to Westminster-hall, with the exception of the 38 peers in the minority, who were unwilling to exhibit their discomfiture to the public eye. The question was now solemnly proposed to

each peer who was present, and the accused minister was unanimously acquitted of the charges preferred against him. *

Marlborough, though unable, from infirmity, to take a share in the discussion, was present at every debate, and voted in favour of the prosecution. We have also the authentic testimony of Erasmus Lewis, the secretary and adherent of Oxford, that he was ranked with the most hostile opponents of the impeached minister; that he was deeply chagrined at the result of the process; and that the duchess, by whose vengeance it was supposed to have been instigated, was "distracted with disappointment." †

We have paid more particular attention to the detail of this celebrated trial; because the result has furnished one among the many unfounded accusations and surmises, which have been raised against the character of Marlborough. The acquittal of Oxford has been solely ascribed to his secret interposition, from a fear, lest the ex-minister should execute a threat of disclosing his treasonable correspondence with king James and the pretender; and different versions of the fact have been circulated from traditional and hearsay reports. Those who are curious in scrutinising such evidence, we refer to the Biographia Britannica, Art. Churchill, Appendix, where two different relations are given, totally contrary to each other, and both bearing the character of improbability.

* Journals; — Chandler's Debates; — Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, chap. 17.

† Erasmus Lewis to Dean Swift, July 1717.

The latter period of Marlborough's life was marked by one of the most extraordinary incidents which occurs in our domestic history, the rise, progress, and fall of the South Sea scheme. We cannot enter farther into this memorable transaction, than merely to state, that the foundation was laid by Harley, when he incorporated a portion of the public creditors into a company, who were to enjoy the monopoly of a trade to the Spanish West Indies. It was afterwards adopted and extended by Sunderland, who sought in this visionary scheme the means of gratifying the hanoverian junta, and increasing his interest in parliament. Notwithstanding the recent and fatal result of a similar project in France, the effect of the plan far surpassed his most sanguine expectations. Every rank and class in society pressed forward to participate in the privileges of so envied a community; and the ministers, through whose recommendation the shares were principally distributed, were courted and regarded as the benefactors of the nation, and the dispensers of inexhaustible treasures.

The mind of Marlborough was not competent to form just calculations on a scheme so complicated and visionary, but he appears to have caught a portion of the national enthusiasm, and wished to increase the share which he previously possessed in the original stock. The duchess also profited by her relationship to lord Sunderland, to obtain subscriptions for herself, her friends, and connections.

When, however, the value of the stock rose to an enormous height, and the national infatuation

was hurrying to a crisis, she foresaw that no profit, however vast, could answer the expectation of the public, and that the fall would be as rapid as the rise. She resisted, therefore, all the solicitations of her son-in-law, and the lures of the other projectors, to embark farther in the scheme; she not only dissuaded her husband from risking any portion of his disposable property, but even induced him to sell out the share he already possessed, before the dreaded crisis arrived, and thus enabled him to realise a sum of no less than £100,000. *

We have frequently had occasion to mention the embarrassments, which the duke of Marlborough experienced from the vehement and petulant temper of his wife, even in the height of his power, and in the full vigour of his faculties. Such embarrassments were still more deeply felt, when he was advanced in years, declining in health, and suffering in mind from bodily infirmity.

It might naturally be supposed that the duchess would, at length, have been satisfied with an administration formed under her son-in-law, and composed of persons who had been patronised by herself and her husband, particularly as they had superseded Walpole and Townshend, by whom she had conceived herself treated with unmerited disrespect. Nothing, however, but unbounded submission, and unlimited power, could content her imperious and capricious temper; and the new ministers were scarcely established in authority, before they incurred her displeasure. In addition

* Letters to Mr. and Mrs. Clayton, from the duchess of Marlborough,

to her political objections to Sunderland, as the patron of the South Sea scheme, she was personally offended by his marriage with a third wife *, who was not only of disproportioned age, but without property, and inferior in rank and connections. Her displeasure was aggravated by the settlement of a considerable part of his limited estate on his new consort, to the detriment of her grand-children. Her insulting remonstrances made a deep impression on a mind, no less vehement and irritable than her own; and their correspondence, at this period, abounds in terms of mutual obloquy and invective.

Against Cadogan, who was associated with Sunderland in the ministry, and whose services had been liberally rewarded with power and honours, she fostered still greater dislike, from other causes. She even accused him of an attempt to appropriate part of the £50,000 which the duke had commissioned him to invest in the dutch funds, because he placed it on austrian securities, which bore a higher interest, but were so much depreciated, that when required to refund his charge, he found great difficulty in realising the principal. The demand gave rise to violent bickerings, and ended in a litigation, in which the perseverance of the duchess established the claims of her husband. †

Secretary Craggs had been long the object of her contempt and abhorrence, from an unjust

* Judith, daughter of Benjamin Tichborne, esq.

† From the voluminous case of lord Cadogan, preserved in the Marlborough Papers, as well as from the narratives of the duchess.

suspicion, that he was the author of an anonymous letter sent to her in 1712, by the penny post, which contained the most cruel aspersions on her person, character, and morals. Her aversion was not lessened by his patronage of the South Sea scheme, or by a knowledge of the enormous gains, which his father was deriving from that nefarious project.

Lord Stanhope was also loaded with a share of her displeasure; as in him she saw a candidate for the offices held by her husband; and in one of her letters bitterly reproached her son-in-law with favouring his pretensions.

Actuated by these antipathies and suspicions, she did not spare the ministers in her conversation, public or private; but, according to secretary Craggs, made them the never-failing theme of her invectives on all occasions. * She even induced her husband to join the general clamour for justice against the South Sea directors and their patrons. Such attacks provoked equal retaliation on their part; and, in this state of mutual recrimination, a plea was eagerly caught, to mortify her and the duke in the most sensible degree.

For some days a rumour was cautiously whispered in the higher circles, that the duchess of Marlborough was implicated in a plot for the restoration of the pretender. Aware of the irritable state of her husband, she concealed it from his knowledge; but he was suddenly summoned to the house of his son-in-law, and acquainted, in language by no

* Secretary Craggs to earl Stanhope, July 15. 1720; — Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, vol. ii. p. 189.

means equivocal or respectful, with the charge against his wife. Appearing deeply afflicted on his return, she enquired the cause of his absence and emotion. " I have been," he said, " to lord Sunderland, who accuses you of a plot to bring in the pretender, and of furnishing him with a sum of money." She treated the imputation with her usual haughty contempt, and endeavoured to soothe his agitation. But when apprised that it had been communicated to the king, and that the duke himself was implicated by common rumour, she appeared at the drawing room, in order to ascertain the effect it had produced on the royal mind. Being twice received with unusual coldness, where she had hitherto been treated with marked attention, she wrote a letter to the king, in vindication of her conduct. She caused it to be translated into french, and having obtained an audience at the apartments of the duchess of Kendal, delivered it with her own hand. The original is here submitted to the reader.

" Sir; As your majesty's known love to justice makes you always open to the complaints of an injured and innocent person, so your goodness will pardon this application, which would have been avoided, if my lord Marlborough's indisposition had not prevented him from laying before your majesty, that which I most humbly beg leave to do in this manner.

" Nothing in the world seems so incredible as that, after all the trouble and danger that I have been exposed to, for my zeal for your majesty and your family, any one can imagine me capable of cri-

minal correspondence with your majesty's greatest enemy, and one who must look upon my lord Marlborough and myself as the objects of his highest resentment.

"Your majesty will readily believe that it was with the greatest astonishment, that I learned I had been represented to your majesty as guilty of so black and foolish a crime.

"'Tis with inexpressible concern that I have borne the thoughts of it for a few days; and, therefore, I am forced to beg that your majesty, out of compassion, as well as justice, would be pleased to afford me an opportunity of vindicating myself from so groundless and cruel an accusation. This I am ready to do, in such a manner as shall seem most proper to your majesty's great wisdom, till which time I cannot help accounting myself the most unhappy of all your majesty's faithful subjects.

"*Dec.* 14. 1720. S. MARLBOROUGH."

She quitted the room, requesting to be honoured with the commands of his majesty, and, after declining the invitation of the duchess of Kendal, to return, on the plea that she could not speak french, received an answer in the king's own hand.

"*St. James's, Dec.* 17. 1720.—Whatever I may have been told upon your account, I think I have shewn, on all occasions, the value I have for the services of the duke your husband; and I am always disposed to judge of him and you, by the behaviour of each of you, in regard to my service. Upon which, I pray God, my lady Marlborough, to preserve you in all happiness.

"GEORGE *R.*"

Attributing to the suggestions of the ministry the guarded language of this reply, she made a new and stronger appeal through the duchess of Kendal.

" *Dec.* 23. 1720. — I cannot possibly forbear to give your grace this new trouble, to express to you the true sense I have of your great civility, and obliging readiness to assist me in the favour I lately begged of you.

" I must ever acknowledge the goodness and condescension of his majesty, in so soon honouring me with a letter under his own hand, in return to what I thought myself obliged to lay before him. It cannot become me to be any farther importunate or troublesome to his majesty, or to desire to give the least unnecessary interruption to those thoughts, which are much better employed, than they could be in any thing that concerns me. But I cannot but still hope, from his majesty's honour, compassion, and justice, that he will, at his own greatest leisure, choose out some opportunity, to permit me to vindicate myself to him in a more particular manner, a happiness which I am desirous of, with the utmost impatience, both as it is my greatest ambition to appear innocent to him above all the world, and as I know that I can justify myself beyond the power of all contradiction, or even suspicion.

" Madam, permit me to say I am injured beyond all expression, and this by an accusation as absurd and incredible as it is wicked. Neither the duke of Marlborough nor myself can have any safety and security, even of our lives as well as fortunes,

but in the safety of his majesty and his family; and is it possible to be conceived, that either of us should be so weak as to contrive or assist in the bringing on our own destruction? But I build not my justification upon such arguments only; it is a subject upon which I can, and do defy the whole world, which I would not do, if I did not know the perfect innocence of my heart, as well as of my actions, and the zeal of my secret wishes for his majesty, as well as the tenour of my outward behaviour. I cannot suppose any man, of all that I know in the world, capable of so great an injustice as to be the author of so wicked an accusation, except one, who perhaps may have malice enough to me, and native dishonour enough in himself, to be guilty of it; and when I say that the person I mean is Mr. Secretary Craggs *, it is enough to add, that his behaviour towards me has been long ago of such a nature, that I have not permitted him these nine years so much as to speak to me. The good nature and humanity I have already experienced in your grace, have occasioned you this second trouble; and give me, at the same time, this fresh occasion of assuring you, that I shall ever remember your civilities with the highest respect, and that I am, with sincerity, madam, your grace's, &c. "S. MARLBOROUGH."

To this appeal the duchess received no other answer than a reference to the letter already written by the king. She was, therefore, so highly in-

* It is but justice to the memory of Mr. Craggs to observe, that he always strenuously denied the charge advanced against him by the duchess.

dignant at a proceeding, which she considered as cruel and injurious, that it was one of the primary causes of her alienation from the court, and subsequent opposition to the government. The mutual resentment excited by this charge, produced also a serious misunderstanding in the Marlborough family, and a suspension of intercourse with lord Sunderland took place, which lasted till nearly the period of his death, on the 19th of April, 1722. *

The decease of lord Sunderland † produced an unexpected embarrassment to his father-in-law. As he had filled the highest offices of state, and had been entrusted with the distribution of money, appropriated to the recompense of secret services, his papers were sealed up by order of government. Application was instantly made for the delivery of these documents, but in vain; and a suit was accordingly instituted against the two secretaries of state, which continued in suspense during the life of the duke of Marlborough. After his decease, it was prosecuted by the duchess and lord Morpeth, as executors; and, on the 30th of November, 1722, a court of delegates decided in favour of the de-

* This incident is minutely described in the narratives of the duchess, and in a letter to the late duchess of Marlborough from lady Blayney, whose mother, lady Cairnes, attended the duchess to court, and was her confidant in the whole transaction.

† By his death, the only survivor of the great whig junta was the earl of Orford, who resigned in disgust on the schism in the whig ministry, and continued out of office till his decease in 1727.

On the accession of George the first, lord Somers was too infirm, from a paralytic attack, to accept any share in the administration. After a lingering decline, he died in 1716. Lord Halifax expired in 1715; and the marquess of Wharton in 1717.

fendants, on the plea that no private person could inspect the papers of a deceased minister, until they had been previously revised by the officers of the crown. After this revision, those documents which did not relate to the secrets of state, were restored to the family, and are now embodied in the archives of Blenheim. *

In justice to the memory of this statesman, we ought to observe, that although he was the principal patron of a scheme which produced such general calamity, he used it merely as a political engine, and did not enrich himself by the public infatuation. Even Mr. Brodrick, who was one of the persons charged to investigate the transaction, and fostered strong prejudices against him, acquits him of any participation, and represents him as the dupe of the directors. † He died greatly embarrassed, owing, among other creditors, £10,000 to his father-in-law; and leaving his numerous family in such straitened circumstances, that the younger children were indebted for their education and maintenance to the affection of the duchess of Marlborough. His library, which was only rivalled by that of lord Oxford, in rarity and extent, was one of the items of his personal property, and now forms the basis of the noble collection preserved at Blenheim. ‡

* Narrative of the duchess; — Boyer's Political State, for Dec. 1723. p. 630.

† See his correspondence with lord Middleton, in the Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole.

‡ The principal item of his personal property was £30,000 in South Sea stock, which, if sold at the height of the infatuation, would have produced no less than £300,000.

CHAPTER 116.

1716—1722.

Historical account of the commencement and progress of the works at Blenheim. — Suit against the duke of Marlborough for the arrears due at the suspension in 1712. — *Decisions of the courts of exchequer and chancery, and the house of lords. — Prosecution and completion of the building at the expence of the duke.*

We have reserved for this portion of our work, the account of the litigation, which arose relative to the building at Blenheim, that we might exhibit to the reader a more regular and detailed narrative of a transaction, which had long been a source of perplexity to the duke of Marlborough.

From the scattered papers relative to this subject, which are so numerous, and, in many parts, so unconnected, it is difficult to form a regular narrative, even if we should encumber our pages with a quantity of dry and uninteresting correspondence. We shall, therefore, only submit to the reader a brief relation of this celebrated process, and the circumstances from which it arose.

We have already stated the promise of the queen, to build, at her own expence, a palace at Woodstock, to be called Blenheim, in honour of the splendid victory; and, that during the administration of lord Godolphin, various sums had been

issued by the royal warrants, amounting to nearly £200,000. * Yet notwithstanding the great amount of these issues, they were far from being adequate to the expences already incurred, and considerable arrears were due to the contractors and workmen, as well as to those who had furnished loans for the purpose of continuing the works.

After the dismission of Godolphin, the new ministers were not inclined to gratify the duke of Marlborough; and not only evaded as much as possible the grant of farther supplies, but endeavoured to throw the whole expence on the duke himself, by eliciting either from him or his duchess, a promise to indemnify the contractors and workmen. The duchess, aware of this artful proceeding, suspended the works in 1710; and only a small sum was issued by the treasurer, sufficient to protect them against the approach of winter.

The undertaking was, however, resumed in the spring of the ensuing year, by the architect, who obtained a balance of £7000 due on a warrant granted by the late lord treasurer Godolphin. He also applied to lord Oxford for a farther advance towards completing this national monument. However unwilling to comply, Oxford was aware that the queen's promise was pledged, and the national honour engaged, and that he could not wholly resist so just a claim. By his order, the architect

* We find from a paper, which appears to have been the opinion of some lawyer, probably Sir John Northey, the duchess's solicitor, that £220,000 were issued in the queen's time into the hands of Mr. Taylor, to be paid by him towards defraying the charge of the works according to the direction of Mr. Travers; and of this sum, £30,000 appear to have been issued by lord Oxford.

submitted to him a memorial, in which, the demand to clear the debts, and to finish what was intended to be done in the current year, was estimated at £87,000. To the inquiry of the treasurer, whether he had well considered the estimate, and whether any thing was omitted, Vanbrugh replied, that many things were left out, which he believed the duke of Marlborough might think fit to do at his own expence; but he hoped that the sum which he had specified might carry the design, as far as he understood the queen at first intended to be done, on a public consideration. From Vanbrugh's report, the treasurer appeared to be well satisfied with this explanation, because the sum required was considerably less than that which he had himself calculated.

Accordingly, on the 17th of July, the treasurer obtained the queen's sign manual for £20,000 *, telling the architect at the same time, that he would procure a farther grant as soon as possible. "On this," Vanbrugh adds, "I acquainted the chief undertakers with what had passed at the treasury; upon which encouragement they went on with the work, without insisting that all the money then issued should go in discharge of the debt, which otherwise they would have done." †

With this supply, the works were carried on, though slowly, until the spring of the ensuing year.

* The original warrant, signed Oxford, is in the Marlborough Papers.

† Letter from Vanbrugh to the duke.

The building, however, still continued to occupy the attention of government; for, on the 25th of June, 1713, an estimate was laid before the house of commons of the debt on the civil list, due at Midsummer, 1710, amounting to £511,762. One of the items was the sum of £60,000 by estimation, for the building of Woodstock. In strict justice, therefore, this sum of £60,000 should have been assigned for the liquidation of the said debt, and the prosecution of the work; but we do not find that more than £10,000 was paid for that purpose, which was not advanced till towards the close of the year, when the queen was indisposed, and Oxford wished to conciliate the duke of Marlborough.

On the accession of the new sovereign, Marlborough had reason to hope that new warrants would be issued from the treasury, for defraying the arrears and completing the work, in conformity with the original design. He accordingly obtained from the architect an estimate of the requisite expence, which, including the gardens and bridge, amounted to £54,527 : 4*s.* : 2*d.*; and, therefore, exceeded the former estimate in a duplicate proportion.

The hopes of Marlborough were in some measure gratified; for in the first year of the new reign, an act was passed "for enlarging the funds of the bank of England, and for satisfying an arrear for work and materials at Blenheim, incurred while that building was carried on at the expence of her late majesty." This act rendered the crown responsible for such arrears, and directed that the

debts incurred before the first of June, 1712, when the works were suspended by order of the queen, should be liquidated out of the sum of £500,000 which had been previously granted for the payment of the debts on the civil list, and the arrears of the revenues belonging to her late majesty. In pursuance of this act a commission was appointed, under letters of privy seal, consisting of Messrs. Lowndes, Craggs, and Sloper, who were authorised to issue £30,000, in liquidation of the arrears. The respective claims being accordingly investigated, each claimant received one-third of his demands, making a total of more than £16,000, through the hands of Mr. Travers, the surveyor-general to the crown. Another payment was afterwards made, to the amount of £9000.

The creditors, however, were not satisfied with this partial liquidation; and in Easter term, 1718, two of the principal claimants instituted a suit in the court of exchequer against the duke of Marlborough and Sir John Vanbrugh, as his surveyor of the works and buildings, appointed by an instrument signed by lord Godolphin, and authorised to make contracts for work and materials. Their demand included nearly £8000 for the principal and interest of the sums due to them, since the payment made under the letters of privy seal. Their application being ineffectually resisted, the court decided that the duke of Marlborough was rendered responsible for their demands, in virtue of the instrument signed by lord Godolphin, which conveyed the requisite powers to Sir John Vanbrugh for acting in his behalf.

The cause was carried by appeal into the house of lords. After hearing the arguments of counsel, the peers, on the 24th of May, rejected the petition of the duke, and confirmed the decree of the court of exchequer. He was himself present, and had the mortification to find the decision supported by a great majority, among whom were many of his friends and relatives. * It is difficult to reconcile such a decision with the principles of equity and national honour; and, therefore, we can only attribute the resolution of the peers to the secret influence of the ministry, who were desirous of exonerating the crown from so heavy a charge.

The duke being rendered legally responsible for the various debts arising out of the building, had no other resource than to apply to the court of chancery, in order to compel the several creditors to submit to an examination of their claims; and the persons who had been entrusted with the issues of money, to verify their payments. The usual procrastination of the court, and the numerous accounts which required scrutiny, together with the attempts made to evade investigation, protracted the cause beyond the duration of the duke's life. But, to satisfy the curiosity of the reader, we shall observe that considerable mismanagement and fraud were proved to have existed in the conduct of the building, and that several items

* Journals; — Case of the duchess of Marlborough and other appellants, submitted to the house of lords in 1724; — Correspondence of Sir John Vanbrugh with the duke and duchess; — Narrative of the duchess.

were rejected, and others diminished. A favourable decree was accordingly given by the lord chancellor Macclesfield, who pronounced a splendid eulogium on the memory of the deceased hero, and depicted in lively terms the dishonour which the nation would incur, by throwing on his representatives the charge of a structure, which was undertaken at the order of the sovereign, as a reward and memorial of his services, and repeatedly sanctioned by the acts of the legislature.

In the interim, the duke of Marlborough had taken several exceptions to the report of the remembrancer in the court of exchequer, who was empowered to assess the debt; he not only denied the delivery of the materials and execution of the work in question, but combated the charge of interest, as contrary to the nature of the transaction, and even beyond the demands of the plaintiffs themselves.

Subsequent to his death, these exceptions were taken into consideration. The two first were overruled; but, after several amendments, the court sanctioned the report of the remembrancer, charging the duke with interest on the said debts, from January 1715, making the claims of the plaintiffs amount to above £9000.

An application for rescinding these orders being ineffectual, the cause was again carried under a new shape to the house of peers, by the duchess and the other executors. It was taken into consideration on the 27th and 28th of February, 1723–4. After a patient investigation, the orders of the court of exchequer were reversed; and the re-

membrancer was directed to enter into a new scrutiny of the litigated claims, to ascertain whether the materials were furnished and the work executed, in conformity with the contracts; and to state the debts which were really and justly due to the respective claimants.

By this decision, the representatives of the duke of Marlborough were made responsible for such arrears as should be proved to be due on the suspension of the works; but we have not the means of tracing the progress of the investigation, or ascertaining the exact sums with which his estate was finally charged. *

* It is curious to examine the grounds on which the duke of Marlborough was deemed responsible for the arrears, in contradiction to the public pledge of the sovereign, and the acts of the legislature.

1st. An instrument, dated May 23. 1705, signed by lord Godolphin, wherein his lordship, at the request of the duke of Marlborough, appoints Henry Joynes to inspect all contracts with workmen and artificers, relating to the building a large fabric for a mansion-house, which the duke of Marlborough had resolved to erect at Woodstock, to admeasure and keep the accounts thereof, and to render to the duke an account of his actings and doings.

2d. An instrument, signed by lord Godolphin, Sept. 24. 1708, by which his lordship, at the instance and desire of the duke of Marlborough, appoints Tilman Robart, gent., comptroller of the works at Blenheim, in place of William Boulter, deceased; and to act jointly with Mr. Vanbrugh, as comptroller of the works. 3d. A letter from the duke of Marlborough, dated Meldert, August 1707, to Sir John Vanbrugh, desiring him to proceed in the works at Blenheim with all possible dispatch, requesting, in the mean time, a sight of the drawings, and an account of the progress made in the building. 4th. A letter acknowledging the receipt of part of the drawings, and requesting others. 5th. Orders given in 1709, by the duke and duchess, for carrying on the house at Blenheim. 6th. Orders, 11th February, 1710, signed by the duke of Marlborough, for finishing several apartments. 7th. A letter from the duke, 5th Dec. 1707, stating that he could not be at Woodstock till the 20th, and expressing his hopes that the pavilion would then be covered, &c. 8th. A letter from the

From the preceding narrative, it will readily appear that this noble structure would have remained a reproach to the nation, had it not owed its completion to the liberality of the hero, whose services it was intended to commemorate.

Soon after his return from exile, he visited the place, with the fond hopes which it was calculated to inspire. Perceiving, however, the backwardness of government in advancing the necessary supplies, he obtained an estimate from the architect, and declared his intention of finishing the building, when he was exonerated from the debts incurred prior to the suspension in 1712. He even gave orders for collecting materials; and, when the act passed in the first year of the new sovereign had declared the crown responsible, he directed the works to be prosecuted at his own expence.

In a letter to Mrs. Clayton *, written about this period, the duchess, with her usual exaggeration and querulousness, thus describes the state of the edifice, and specifies the charges attending its construction.

" As to the affair of this building, I will state

duchess, Nov. 2. relative to the payment of the workmen. 9th. A letter from the duchess, Nov. 4. on treating with smiths for locks and hinges. 10th. A letter from the duchess, requesting that Mr. Taylor should be enabled to pay to the use of Mr. Parker, in London, such sums as he should advance to the comptrollers for the weekly payments; and stating that Mr. Parker would run no risk, after the assurances received from the duke of Marlborough, by the lord treasurer, that the payment of the works should be continued as before. — " From a Note of such exhibits as the plaintiff, in the original cause, intended to prove."

* Without date, and imperfect, but evidently written in 1716, between the visit of the duke to Blenheim, and his first relapse.

it to you as short as I can; the public has, and are to pay two hundred and sixty-five thousand pounds for it. The duke of Marlborough has paid and owes, above nine thousand pounds since 1712, and we have yet nothing like a habitation for it. Of this great sum, thirty-eight thousand was paid, with the increase of the debts after the earl of Godolphin went out, before the building quite stopped; and for that sum of £38,000, it is literally true, that there is nothing done worth naming; and what I have taken out of the books does not amount to £2000. Without any aggravation, there is a vast deal more to do than is done; the finishing that is done is but a trifle, and there is a great many thousand pounds wanting yet, to complete what is called only the shell; besides all without doors, where there is nothing done, and is a chaos that turns one's brains but to think of it; and it will cost an immense sum to complete the causeway, and that ridiculous bridge, in which I counted 33 rooms. Four houses are to be at each corner of the bridge; but that which makes it so much prettier than London bridge is, that you may set in six rooms, and look out at window into the high arch, while the coaches are driving over your head. But notwithstanding all this, Sir John has given lord Marlborough an estimate, in which he tells him all is to be complete for fifty-four thousand three hundred and eighty-one pounds; and because I can't believe that such a sum will do all, when thirty-eight thousand so lately did nothing, I am thought by him very troublesome, and quite stupid."

The illness of the duke, and the tedious litigation

which ensued, created such delays, that little progress was made in the work at the time of his decease. In the interim, a serious misunderstanding arose between the duchess and the architect, which forms the subject of a voluminous correspondence. Vanbrugh was, in consequence, removed, and the direction of the building confided to other hands, under her own immediate superintendence.

Notwithstanding all the chagrin and mortification which this building had caused, it was still near the heart of Marlborough; and he left by his will £50,000 to be expended by equal instalments, in five years, for its completion, under the sole controul of his widow. By her vigilant attention the undertaking was prosecuted with a degree of economy, which is strikingly contrasted with the preceding expenditure; and she had the satisfaction of fulfilling the wishes of her deceased husband within the limited time, and for half the sum which he had charged on his estates. At her own expence, she also constructed the triumphal arch, which forms the entrance from Woodstock, and raised the column, which bears on its summit the statue of the illustrious hero, and on its base the record of his victories, and the acts of the legislature which sanctioned the building, and settled the domain on himself, his widow, and his posterity.

From a review of the different statements, we may estimate the expenditure, on the part of the public, at £240,000, and on that of the duke and his widow at £60,000 more, making, in the whole, a total of £300,000.

CHAPTER 117.

1716—1722.

Private life, habits, and amusements of the duke of Marlborough, in his latter years.—Account of his final testamentary arrangements, in 1721.—*New attack of his paralytic disorder, and death.—Ceremonies of his funeral at Westminster Abbey.—Removal of his body to Blenheim.—Disposal of his property.—Account of his immediate descendants.*

It is gratifying to follow illustrious characters into the shade of retirement, and to trace the conduct of a great man, in that stage of existence, when grandeur and power lose their charms, when the body is afflicted by disease, and the mind robbed of its vigour and elasticity. In such a light, we now contemplate the duke of Marlborough.

He persisted, as we have already stated, in fulfilling the duties of his official situations, and attending the sittings of parliament, till within six months of his decease. The intervals of his leisure, when not passed in London, were spent at Blenheim, Holywell House, or Windsor Lodge. His habits of life were perfectly domestic, and did not belie the fond anxiety he had manifested, while engaged in busier scenes, for the society of his family and friends. His favourite and constant exercise was riding, either in a carriage or on

horseback; and, whenever his health permitted, in walking round his grounds, particularly at Blenheim, where he delighted to contemplate his own creation. His amusements consisted in the company of his friends, whom he was accustomed to receive without ceremony, or in the recreation of cards. He played at ombre, basset, and picquet, sometimes with his grand-children even at commerce; but his favourite game was whist. From Miss Cairnes, afterwards lady Blayney *, who formed one of the junior circle, we learn that he was extremely attentive to the education of his grand-daughters, and occasionally witnessed, with parental fondness, their lessons in dancing and music. From the same authority, we find that his recreations were varied with dramatic exhibitions,

* Miss Cairnes was the daughter of Sir Alexander Cairnes, bart., an eminent merchant in London, and afterwards resident in Ireland. The connection between his family and that of Marlborough commenced during a visit which the duke paid, in 1718, to general Withers, at Blackheath, where Sir Alexander had a villa. The assiduity, sound sense, and fascinating qualities of lady Cairnes, won the esteem of the duchess, and led to an intimate friendship and correspondence. The duchess patronised Miss Cairnes, made her the companion of her grand-daughters, and superintended her education. She married, first, in 1724, Cadwallader, seventh lord Blayney, by whom she had no issue; and, secondly, colonel Murray, by whom she had several daughters. One of these espoused viscount Clermont, and another general Cunningham.

These connections introduced lady Blayney to the correspondence of the late duchess of Marlborough, who was curious for information relative to the illustrious ancestor of her husband. In the latter part of her life, which was extended to the age of eighty, lady Blayney wrote several interesting letters to the duchess, and her son-in-law, which contain many valuable anecdotes relative to the latter years of John duke of Marlborough. From these letters, which are preserved at Blenheim, I have drawn many particulars recorded in this and other chapters.

in which the younger branches of his family, and their companions bore a part. Two of these were, "Tamerlane," and "All for Love," which were introduced with addresses written for the occasion, lauding the achievements of the duke, and the virtues and graces of the duchess, in a high tone of eulogium. The prologue to "All for Love," written by the celebrated Dr. Hoadley, then bishop of Bangor, has been preserved; and the reader may, perhaps, not be displeased to peruse the strains, to which the declining hero listened with pardonable complacency, even though they are little recommended by poetical merit. One peculiarity in this address deserves notice, namely, the anticipation of the period, when the exploits of Marlborough would be commemorated, not in verse, but in plain prose, and in chronological order; a prediction which was evidently introduced to gratify the duchess, who was then collecting materials for the life of her husband, and affected a singular prejudice against poetical eulogy. *

PROLOGUE.

Whilst ancient dames and heroes in us live,
And scenes of love and war, we here revive,
Greater in both, in both more fortunate,
Than all that ever ages past called great,
O Marlboro'! think not wrong that I thee name,
And first do homage to thy brighter fame.

* The reader will doubtless recollect the clause in her will, leaving £ 1000 to Glover and Mallet, the intended biographers of the duke, in which she couples her bequest with a prohibition against inserting even a single line of verse. — See Introduction.

Beauty and virtue with each other strove
To move and recompence thy early love,
Beauty which Egypt's queen could never boast,
And virtue she ne'er knew, or quickly lost.
A soul so form'd and cloth'd, Heav'n must design
For such a soul, and such a form as thine;
But called from soft repose, and beauty's charms,
Thy louder fame is spoke in feats of arms.
The fabled stories of great Philip's son,
By thy great deeds, the world has seen outdone.
The Cæsars that Rome boasted, yield their bays,
And own in justice thy superior praise.
They fought, the empire of the world to gain,
But thou, to break the haughty tyrant's chain.
They fought t' enslave mankind, but thou to free
Whole nations from detested slavery.
Their guilty paths to grandeur, taught to hate
By virtue, nor to blush for being great.
This heap of stones, which Blenheim's palace frame,
Rose in this form a mon'ment to thy name;
This heap of stones must crumble into sand,
But thy great name shall through all ages stand.
In fate's dark book, I saw thy long-lived name,
And thus the certain prophecy proclaim:

One shall arise, who will thy deeds rehearse,
Not in arched roofs, or in suspected verse,
But in plain annals of each glorious year,
With pomp of truth the story shall appear.
Long after Blenheim's wall shall mouldered lie,
Or blown by winds to distant countries fly;
By him shall thy great actions all survive
And by thy name shall his be taught to live.

O cherish the remains of life — survey
Those years of glory which can ne'er decay.
Enjoy the best reward below allow'd,
The mem'ry of past actions, great and good.

We introduce also an account of the Dramatis Personæ, accompanied with a few remarks from the lively pen of lady Blayney, who performed the part of Serapion, the high-priest.

PLAY PERFORMED AT BLENHEIM.

"*All for Love, or The World Well Lost.*"

Mark Anthony ..... Captain Fish (the page of the duchess).
Ventidius..... Old Mr. Jennings.
Serapion (the high-priest) Miss Cairnes.
Alexas ..... Mrs. La Vie.*
Cleopatra..... Lady Charlotte Macarthy.
Octavia... ..... Lady Anne Spencer.
Children of Anthony ... { Lady Anne Egerton. / Lady Diana Spencer.

[*Scene the Bow-window Room.*] [*Great Screens for changing Scenes.*]

"The bishop of Winchester (Hoadley) writ a prologue upon the occasion, which I think I have given the duchess of Marlborough. Miss Cairnes, as high-priest, wore a very fine surplice, that came from Holland for the chapel (no sacrilege), for the chapel was not finished many years after. What makes me call it a fine surplice is, that all the breast was worked in what, many years after, was called Dresden work. The old duke was so pleased, that we played it three times; first, because we were to play it; some time after, for lord Winchelsea, then lord Finch, and a great favourite there; and the third time at the duke's request. The duchess scratched out some of the most amorous speeches, and there was no embrace

* Mrs. La Vie was the daughter of a french refugee, and a relation of lady Cairnes. She acted as governess to Miss Cairnes, afterwards lady Blayney, who speaks in the highest terms of her good sense, knowledge, and accomplishments. She was often a guest at the petits soupers, or weekly entertainments, which lady Darlington was accustomed to give to George the First, and where she assembled persons distinguished for their taste and literary acquirements. She was the lady who translated into french the duchess's letter to the king, mentioned in chapter 115.

allowed, &c. In short, no offence to the company. I suppose we made a very grand appearance; there was profusion of brocade rolls, &c., of what was to be the window-curtains at Blenheim. Jewels you may believe in plenty; and I think Mark Anthony wore the sword that the emperor gave the duke of Marlborough." *

In the intervals of his disorder, Marlborough enjoyed sufficient health and activity to visit his friends and relations, and even to pay his court to the prince and princess of Wales, by whom he was treated with peculiar marks of attention and regard. An account of one of these visits is preserved by the duchess, in a letter to Mrs. Clayton.

"*July* 9. 1720.—I was in great hopes to have seen you here, dear Mrs. Clayton, last night, because Mr. Clayton writ me word that you would come the end of this week. But, believing you would not set out so early as to be here at dinner, I went to Richmond, to pay my duty to their royal highnesses, where the duke of Marlborough and I had such a reception as would fill more than this paper to repeat; and I will only say, in short, that they were both very good; and the princess was so very kind to the duke of Marlborough and to poor me, and had so many agreeable ways of expressing

* This participation of the duke in juvenile amusements reminds us of Scipio picking up shells on the sea-beach, Augustus playing with children on the floor of his apartment, and Henry the Fourth of France racing round his nursery, with his son astride on his back. It is recorded of the last amiable monarch, that being surprised in his playful situation by a foreign embassador, he asked him if he was a father. On his answering in the affirmative, he added, "Well, then, we may finish our race."

it, that I really love her; and whatever may be deficient in the late reconcilement, I am sure if others are treated as we were, they will never want a full court of the best sort of people that this country affords. All the attendants, from the lord chamberlain, and ladies of the bed-chamber, to the pages of the back-stairs, were so civil, that I thought myself in a new world. There was very good music, though her royal highness, I saw, thought I liked the noise of the box and dice, and contrived it so as to make me play on, when she left us in a very pretty manner. The place is wonderfully pleasant, the woods wild and charming, some part of the walks in the garden fine, and the house very handsome for any body but the heir to the crown. Mr. Neville went with us, who is more extraordinary in singing, than what he is so much commended for, that is, his skill at ombre, and that qualification pleases me mightily without any expence. As I play ill, the other entertainment is very chargeable; but as I have nobody or but few to take care of when I am dead, I will venture to play with him and my lord Cardigan all the time I am at Woodstock, if I can keep them so long with me.

" I have not passed a day a long time so agreeably as I did yesterday, and had full satisfaction and content, tho' I lost a great deal of money for one that is not in the South Sea. I must tell you one thing that will make you laugh; when lady Charlotte went away, the princess called her back, and desired her to hold up her head, which is a thing I am teazing her about every day. You

will see by all this how full I am of the princess's goodness; but, to end this head, I could not help reflecting, as I went home, that if princes would use every body so well, and choose ministers in the interest of their country, and of good reputation, they might be as absolute as they pleased, without the expence of bribing the parliament."

From the state of his disorder and the consciousness of his declining strength, Marlborough anticipated his dissolution, and, in the latter period of his life, made a final disposition of his vast property.

We have already stated the contents of the will which he made in 1703, soon after the death of his only son. This testament was, however, superseded by another in 1712, just before his departure for the continent, which was afterwards modified and amended by different codicils in 1718, 1719, and 1720. Of the execution of two of these documents, an account has been preserved by the duchess.

"I think it proper, in this place, to give some account of the duke of Marlborough's distemper, and how he was when he signed his will. The duke of Marlborough was taken very ill at St. Alban's in May, 1716, with the palsy; but he recovered it so much as to go to Bath. He lived till June 15. 1722; and tho' he had often returns of this illness, he went many journeys, and was in all appearance well, excepting that he could not pronounce all words, which is common in that distemper, but his understanding was as good as ever. But he did not speak much to strangers, because when he was stopt, by not being able to

pronounce some words, it made him uneasy. But to his friends that he was used to, he would talk freely; and since his death, Mr. Hanbury *, the dowager lady Burlington, and many others of my friends, have remarked to me, with pleasure, the things that they had heard him say, and the just observations he had made upon what others had said to him; and he gave many instances of remembering several things in conversation that others had forgot." * * * * * *

"*Feb.* 22. 1719–20. — Upon that day the duke of Marlborough made a codicil to his will, in which he gave my lord Rialton a settlement during his mother's life, and in case lord Rialton died, and she had no son, a settlement upon my lord Spencer. He had signed this settlement about a month before; and upon making this, it was corrected. * * * * *

"The duke of Marlborough was so impatient to sign this codicil, that he called for the witnesses two or three times before they were ready, to come in to see him sign. He was so well that Dean Jones dined with him that day; and in the evening my lord Coningsby, Doctor Hare, and Mrs. Jennings were with him. He played at cards with Dean Jones and lady Anne Spencer; afterwards he saw my lady Burlington, lord Cardigan, general Lumley, and lord Carlton, who took notice to me, as he sat by us at play, that he had not seen the duke of Marlborough so well a long time."

Well aware of the tedious litigation which fre-

* Major Hanbury of Ponty Pool. — See an account of him in the Monmouthshire Tour, chap. 25.

quently arises from obscure and equivocal bequests, and knowing the plea which might possibly be drawn from his own bodily infirmities, to question his testamentary dispositions, he took particular care to obviate all objections, and give the fullest proof of his competency to fulfil so solemn and important a duty. Of this transaction the duchess has also preserved a circumstantial detail.

" I think I have already given an account of his directions to Sir Edward Northey and Sir Robert Raymond, to alter his will, when he found the necessity of doing it. They kept it a long time before it was finished, and when he signed it, which I think was in 1721, or about that time, after it had all been read over to him, he sent to the persons whom he intended to be witnesses, to dine with him at Marlborough House; my lord Finch, general Lumley, and Dr. Clarke *, who, at my desire, had all read the will before it was signed. As soon as dinner was over, he asked if Mr. Green was come (he was Sir Edward Northey's clerk); and as soon as he came into the room, he asked him how his mother did. Upon Mr. Green's being come to put the seals to the will, the duke of Marlborough rose from the table, and fetched it himself out of his closet; and as he held it in his hand, he declared to the witnesses, that it was his last will, that he had considered it vastly well, and was entirely satisfied with it; and then he signed every sheet of paper, and delivered it in all the forms. After this, the witnesses all sat at

* The celebrated Dr. Samuel Clarke, rector of St. James's.

the table, and talked for some time. Lord Finch and Dr. Clarke went away first, about business; and when general Lumley rose up to go, who staid a good while longer than the others, who had business, the duke of Marlborough rose up too, and went to him and embraced him, taking him by the hand, and thanking him for the favour he had done him."

The duke of Marlborough survived his testamentary arrangement above a year; and, on the 27th of November, 1721, made his last appearance in the house of lords. He passed the winter in London, in his wonted habits, and with his usual company, and, in May, removed to Windsor Lodge. Towards the beginning of June he was again attacked with a violent paroxysm of his paralytic disorder, which resisted the customary remedies. He lay several days, fully sensible of his approaching dissolution, and retained his senses so perfectly, that on the evening before his decease, he listened to the prayers which were usually read to him; and to a question of the duchess, whether he had heard them, replied distinctly, "Yes; and I joined in them." As he was then reposing on the couch, the duchess enquired whether he would not be easier on his bed, and, on his reply in the affirmative, he was removed to his apartment. Medicines were administered; the blisters which had been applied were dressed; and an inflammation in his back was fomented. His family and servants gradually withdrew, leaving the duchess and the necessary attendants in the apartment, and he lay without any symptom of immediate dissolution,

till four in the morning, when his strength suddenly failed, and he calmly rendered up his spirit to his Maker, in the 72d year of his age. *

His body being embalmed, was removed to Marlborough House, where it lay in state. The funeral exhibited a display of military parade and regal pomp, which has been seldom paralleled. The magnificence of the spectacle was heightened by a vast concourse of spectators, from all the provinces of the three kingdoms, who poured forth their multitudes to join the inhabitants of the capital, in celebrating the obsequies of the first and most renowned among their heroes.

The procession was opened by bands of military, accompanied by a detachment of artillery, in the rear of which followed lord Cadogan, commander-in-chief, and several general officers, who had been devoted to the person of the duke, and had suffered in his cause. Amidst long files of heralds, officers at arms, mourners, and assistants, the eye was caught by the banners and guidons emblazoned with his armorial achievements, among which was displayed, on a lance, the standard of Woodstock, exhibiting the arms of France on the cross of St. George. †

* Lediard says, that he died in his 73d year; the french biographer, more truly, "près de soixante douze ans;" for he was born on the 22d of June, 1650, and, consequently, had not completed his 72d year. The duchess erroneously states him to have died on the 15th of June, (see p. 381.) whereas he died on the 16th, at four in the morning.

† An engraving of this standard, which is annually presented to the crown by the possessor of Blenheim, and which was borne at the funeral, by special licence from the king, is given in the Appendix, with a copy of the licence.

In the centre of the cavalcade was an open car, bearing the coffin, which contained his mortal remains, surmounted with a suit of complete armour, and lying under a gorgeous canopy, adorned with plumes, military trophies, and heraldic achievements. To the sides, shields were affixed, exhibiting emblematic representations of the battles he had gained, and the towns he had conquered, with the motto, "*Bello, hæc et plura.*" On either side were five captains in military mourning, bearing aloft a series of bannerols, charged with the different quarterings of the Churchill and Jennings families.

The duke of Montagu, who acted as chief mourner, was supported by the earls of Sunderland and Godolphin, and assisted by eight dukes and two earls. Four earls were also selected to bear the pall. The procession was closed by a numerous train of carriages, belonging to the nobility and gentry, headed by those of the king and the prince of Wales.

The cavalcade moved along St. James's Park to Hyde Park Corner, and from thence through Piccadilly and Pall Mall, by Charing Cross, to Westminster Abbey. At the west door it was received by the dignitaries and members of the church, in their splendid habiliments; and the venerable pile blazed with tapers and torches innumerable. When the necessary arrangements were completed, the choir opened the service, with the introductory sentence, "I am the resurrection and the life." The procession then moved through the nave and choir to the chapel of Henry the seventh, where

the remainder of the funeral office was read by bishop Atterbury, as dean of Westminster, whose impressive delivery gave additional solemnity to the most pathetic portion of our liturgy. The body was lowered into the vault, at the east end of the tomb of Henry the seventh*; and, at the close of the service, the ceremony was concluded by Garter king of arms, who, advancing to the verge of the grave, recited the various titles and honours of the deceased, and pronounced the awful proclamation, "Thus it has pleased Almighty God, to take out of this transitory world, into his mercy, the Most High, Mighty, and Noble Prince, John Duke of Marlborough." †

This solemn ceremonial was, however, performed merely to render national honours to the remains of the great commander; for his body was not long suffered to repose in this ancient receptacle of royalty; but removed to the chapel at Blenheim, where it was finally deposited, in a magnificent mausoleum, executed by Rysbrack, under the superintendence of the duchess.

The duke of Marlborough died immensely rich, as is evident from his testamentary bequests.

He bequeathed to his widow a jointure of

* From the communication of the Rev. Dr. Ireland, dean of Westminster.

† It has been generally supposed that the charges of this sumptuous funeral were defrayed by the crown; but the duchess asserts that they were borne by herself, and her statement is confirmed by lady Blayney, in a letter to the late duchess, as well as by Lediard. At my request, the dean of Westminster kindly ordered a search of the chapter books, to ascertain this point; but no evidence appears, to prove by whom the fees and other expences were paid.

£15,000 per annum, free of all charges and deductions, with the option of changing the £5000 from the Post Office, for an annuity of the same amount on his property; from the just motive, that the public grant should devolve on the person who succeeded to his title. She was also empowered to dispose of £10,000 annually, for the space of five years, in the completion of the works at Blenheim; and the purchase of estates, or any other investment of his personal property, was subjected to her approbation, in concurrence with that of lady Godolphin and lord Rialton. As the manor of Woodstock and the mansion of Blenheim were already settled on her by act of parliament, the terms of the bequest indicate no less his wish, that she should be considered as his representative, than the gratitude which he invariably expressed for her affection and tenderness.

"And whereas in and by my said hereinbefore recited will, I gave to my said wife and her assigns, during the term of her natural life, the sum of £10,000 per annum, clear of taxes; and whereas my personal estate is since greatly increased, and my said wife has been very tender and careful of me, and had great trouble with me during my illness, and I intending for the consideration aforesaid, and out of the tender affection, great respect, and gratitude which I have and bear to her, and for the better support of her title and honour, to increase her said annuity £5000 a year," &c.

The duchess was authorised to dispose of her own personal property, and to bequeath her paternal estate at Sandridge to any of her grand-

children at discretion; but the mansion of Marlborough House, of which the scite had been granted to her by the crown, she was requested to leave to the successor in the title. The service of gold plate presented to the duke by the elector of Hanover, and the diamond sword, which was the gift of the emperor Charles, together with the insignia of the garter, were bequeathed as heir-looms to lord Rialton; but the rest of the plate and jewels were devised to the duchess.

The residue of his property, after the payment of different legacies to his younger daughter and grand-children, was devised to his eldest daughter, Henrietta countess of Godolphin, and her heirs male, with a reversionary entail on the male issue of his other daughters. In failure of issue male, the succession was to revert in the same order to the female line.

To lord Godolphin, an annuity of £5000 a year was assigned, if he survived his wife; and to their eldest son, lord Rialton, heir apparent, an allowance of £3000 per annum, which was to be increased to £8000 when the works at Blenheim were finished; and to £20,000 on the death of the duchess dowager. A similar provision was made for the presumptive heir of the Sunderland line, should lord Rialton die without issue male; and on the eventual succession of the earl of Sunderland to the title of Marlborough, and the possession of the Blenheim estates, he was required to relinquish his paternal inheritance in favour of his younger brother or brothers.

Lastly, we ought not to omit a singular clause,

which proves the anxiety of the noble testator to maintain the dignity of the titles he had acquired for his posterity; for he enjoined his executors to obtain from the legislature an act for settling on his future representative all the landed estates, which, at subsequent periods, might be purchased with the principal or interest of his personal property.

The trustees appointed by the will, were Sarah duchess of Marlborough, his three sons-in-law, the dukes of Montagu and Bridgewater, and lord Godolphin; William Guydot, William Clayton, and John Hanbury, of Ponty Pool, esquires. *

On the decease of the duke, the title and honours descended to his eldest daughter Henrietta. Her son, William, became Marquis of Blandford, but died in 1731, in the thirty-third year of his age, leaving no issue by a marriage which he had contracted with a dutch lady of the family of De Jong, of Utrecht. † On the death of Henrietta, therefore, which happened in 1733, the title and honours passed to the Sunderland line. Robert, the eldest son of Anne, countess of Sunderland, having died in 1729, Charles, his next brother, fourth earl of Sunderland, succeeded to the dukedom of Marlborough; and, in 1744, became possessor of Blenheim, and all the estates, on the demise of the duchess dowager. In conformity with the will of his grandfather, he relinquished his paternal property and mansion of Althorpe to

* Will of John duke of Marlborough, and various extracts and memoranda in the hand-writing of the duchess.

† She espoused in second nuptials Sir William Windham.

his brother John, who was founder of the second Spencer line. To him Sarah, duchess of Marlborough, also left her own paternal estates, and the property accumulated during her long widowhood, which rendered him no less opulent than the representative of the elder branch.

From Charles earl of Sunderland, and duke of Marlborough, George, the present duke, is lineally descended; and, in testimony of respect for the memory of his illustrious ancestor, he has assumed the name and arms of Churchill, in conjunction with those of Spencer. From John, the second son, the present earl Spencer likewise derives his origin in lineal descent.

Henrietta, duchess of Marlborough, by her husband Francis earl of Godolphin, left two daughters. Henrietta, the elder, espoused Thomas Holles, duke of Newcastle; Mary, the younger, espoused Thomas duke of Leeds; and from her is descended George, the present and sixth duke of Leeds.

Mary, the fourth daughter of John duke of Marlborough, espoused John duke of Montagu, by whom she had three sons, John, George, and Edward Churchill, who all died in infancy; and three daughters, of whom the second, Eleanor, died unmarried. Isabella, the eldest, who espoused, first, William duke of Manchester, was celebrated as the most beautiful woman of her age, and is the subject of the animated poem by Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, entitled "Isabella, or the Morning." By the duke she had no issue. She married, secondly, Edward Hussey, esquire, who, on the death of his father-in-law, assumed the name and

arms of Montagu, was created successively baron and earl Beaulieu, and expired in 1802. Their only son John was born in 1747, assumed the title of lord Montagu, and died in 1787. A daughter, Isabella, born in 1750, died in 1772.

Mary, the youngest daughter of John duke of Montagu, married George Brudenell, fourth earl of Cardigan, who, in 1766, was created duke of Montagu. * Their only son, John marquis of Monthermer, was born in 1735, and died unmarried in 1770; and their surviving daughter Elizabeth, espousing Henry late duke of Buccleugh, became the fruitful mother of a line of descendants from John duke of Marlborough. †

Sarah, duchess of Marlborough, long survived her illustrious husband. Though at the age of sixty-two when she became a widow, she still possessed sufficient attractions to captivate lord Coningsby and the duke of Somerset, who both made her proposals of marriage in the first and second year of her widowhood. An epistle of lord Coningsby is preserved, which breathes all the despondency of a love-sick shepherd; and another from the duke of Somerset, in which the high-

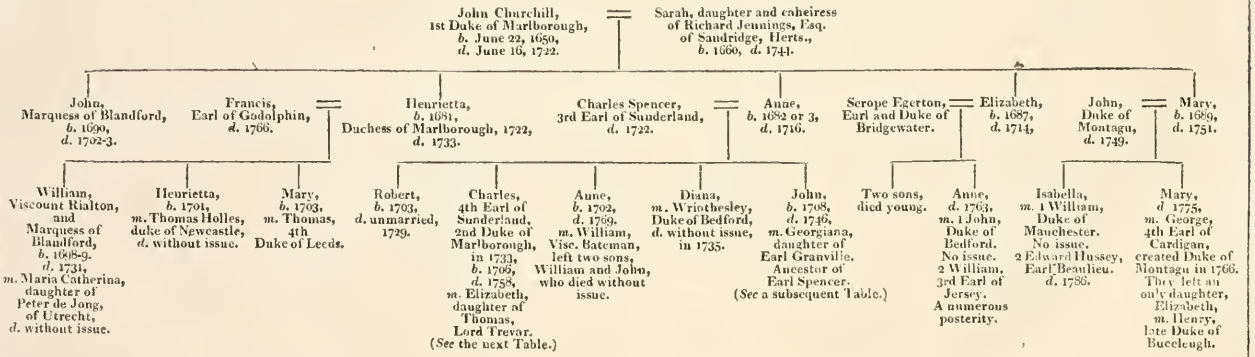
* George duke of Montagu was, in 1786, created baron Montagu, with remainder in failure of his heirs-male to lord Henry James Montagu, second son of his daughter Elizabeth duchess of Buccleugh.

† The french biographer, besides the legitimate issue, bestows on the duke of Marlborough several natural sons, one of whom, he says, was father of general Churchill, who distinguished himself at the battle of Fontenoy. We find, however, no traces of such a progeny; and, unfortunately for his accuracy, the officer in question proves to have been the grandson of Charles Churchill, the brother of the duke. His father had previously signalised himself at the battle of Ramilies, and he forms one of the humorous characters in Sir Charles Hanbury Williams's poem of "Isabella, or the Morning."

(To face page 392. Vol. VI.)

GENEALOGICAL TABLE

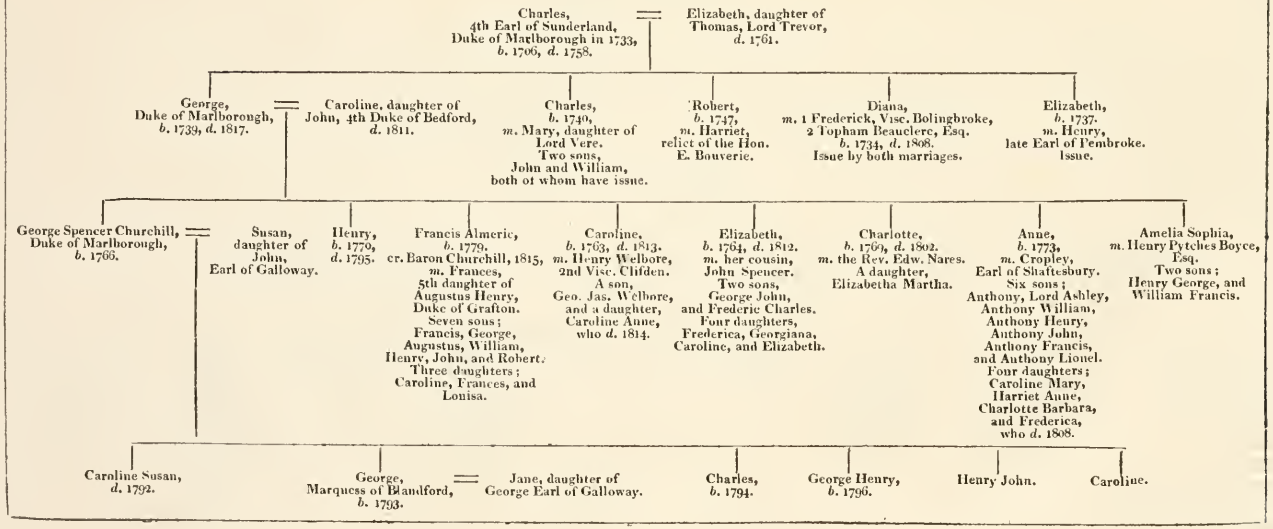
Of the immediate Descendants of JOHN DUKE *of* MARLBOROUGH.


John Churchill, 1st Duke of Marlborough, b. June 22, 1650, d. June 16, 1722.
Sarah, daughter and coheiress of Richard Jennings, Esq. of Sandridge, Herts., b. 1660, d. 1744.
John, Marquess of Blandford, b. 1690, d. 1702-3.
Francis, Earl of Godolphin, d. 1766.
Henrietta, b. 1681, Duchess of Marlborough, 1722, d. 1733.
Charles Spencer, 3rd Earl of Sunderland, d. 1722.
Anne, b. 1682 or 3, d. 1716.
Scrope Egerton, Earl and Duke of Bridgewater.
Elizabeth, b. 1687, d. 1714.
John, Duke of Montagu, d. 1749.
Mary, b. 1689, d. 1751.
William, Viscount Rialton, and Marquess of Blandford, b. 1698-9, d. 1731, m. Maria Catherina, daughter of Peter de Jong, of Utrecht, d. without issue.
Henrietta, b. 1701, m. Thomas Holles, duke of Newcastle, d. without issue.
Mary, b. 1703, m. Thomas, 4th Duke of Leeds.
Robert, b. 1703, d. unmarried, 1729.
Charles, 4th Earl of Sunderland, 2nd Duke of Marlborough, in 1733, b. 1706, d. 1758, m. Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas, Lord Trevor. (See the next Table.)
Anne, b. 1702, d. 1769, m. William, Visc. Bateman, left two sons, William and John, who died without issue.
Diana, m. Wriothesley, Duke of Bedford, d. without issue, in 1735.
John, b. 1708, d. 1746, m. Georgiana, daughter of Earl Granville. Ancestor of Earl Spencer. (See a subsequent Table.)
Two sons, died young.
Anne, d. 1763, m. 1 John, Duke of Bedford. No issue. 2 William, 3rd Earl of Jersey. A numerous posterity.
Isabella, m. 1 William, Duke of Manchester. No issue. 2 Edward Hussey, Earl Beaulieu. d. 1786.
Mary, d. 1775, m. George, 4th Earl of Cardigan, created Duke of Montagu in 1766. They left an only daughter, Elizabeth, m. Henry, late Duke of Buccleugh.

To follow Table II.

GENEALOGICAL TABLE

Exhibiting the Descent of the Ducal Title of MARLBOROUGH, in the first Branch of the SUNDERLAND Line.

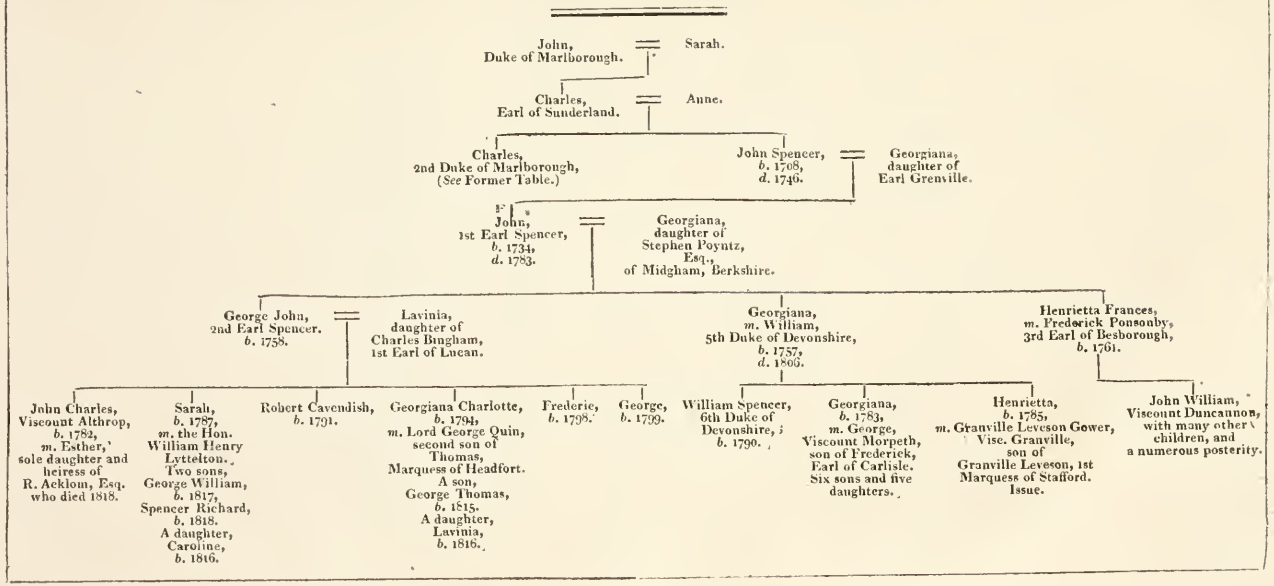

Charles, 4th Earl of Sunderland, Duke of Marlborough in 1733, b. 1706, d. 1758.
Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas, Lord Trevor, d. 1761.
George, Duke of Marlborough, b. 1739, d. 1817.
Caroline, daughter of John, 4th Duke of Bedford, d. 1811.
Charles, b. 1740, m. Mary, daughter of Lord Vere. Two sons, John and William, both of whom have issue.
Robert, b. 1747, m. Harriet, relict of the Hon. E. Bouverie.
Diana, m. 1 Frederick, Visc. Bolingbroke, 2 Topham Beauclerc, Esq. b. 1734, d. 1808. Issue by both marriages.
Elizabeth, b. 1737. m. Henry, late Earl of Pembroke. Issue.
George Spencer Churchill, Duke of Marlborough, b. 1766.
Susan, daughter of John, Earl of Galloway.
Henry, b. 1770, d. 1795.
Francis Almeric, b. 1779, cr. Baron Churchill, 1815, m. Frances, 5th daughter of Augustus Henry, Duke of Grafton. Seven sons; Francis, George, Augustus, William, Henry, John, and Robert. Three daughters; Caroline, Frances, and Louisa.
Caroline, b. 1763, d. 1813. m. Henry Welbore, 2nd Visc. Clifden. A son, Geo. Jas. Welbore, and a daughter, Caroline Anne, who d. 1814.
Elizabeth, b. 1764, d. 1812. m. her cousin, John Spencer. Two sons, George John, and Frederic Charles. Four daughters, Frederica, Georgiana, Caroline, and Elizabeth.
Charlotte, b. 1769, d. 1802. m. the Rev. Edw. Nares. A daughter, Elizabetha Martha.
Anne, b. 1773, m. Cropley, Earl of Shaftesbury. Six sons; Anthony, Lord Ashley, Anthony William, Anthony Henry, Anthony John, Anthony Francis, and Anthony Lionel. Four daughters; Caroline Mary, Harriet Anne, Charlotte Barbara, and Frederica, who d. 1808.
Amelia Sophia, m. Henry Pytches Boyce, Esq. Two sons; Henry George, and William Francis.
Caroline Susan, d. 1792.
George, Marquess of Blandford, b. 1793.
Jane, daughter of George Earl of Galloway.
Charles, b. 1794.
George Henry, b. 1796.
Henry John.
Caroline.

IV.

(To follow Table III.)

GENEALOGICAL TABLE.

Descendants of JOHN DUKE *of* MARLBOROUGH, *of the Second Branch of the Sunderland Line.*


John, Duke of Marlborough.
Sarah.
Charles, Earl of Sunderland.
Anne.
Charles, 2nd Duke of Marlborough, (See Former Table.)
John Spencer, b. 1708, d. 1746.
Georgiana, daughter of Earl Grenville.
John, 1st Earl Spencer, b. 1734, d. 1783.
Georgiana, daughter of Stephen Poyntz, Esq., of Midgham, Berkshire.
George John, 2nd Earl Spencer. b. 1758.
Lavinia, daughter of Charles Bingham, 1st Earl of Lucan.
Georgiana, m. William, 5th Duke of Devonshire, b. 1757, d. 1806.
Henrietta Frances, m. Frederick Ponsonby, 3rd Earl of Besborough, b. 1761.
John Charles, Viscount Althrop, b. 1782, m. Esther, sole daughter and heiress of R. Acklom, Esq. who died 1818.
Sarah, b. 1787, m. the Hon. William Henry Lyttelton. Two sons, George William, b. 1817, Spencer Richard, b. 1818. A daughter, Caroline, b. 1816.
Robert Cavendish, b. 1791.
Georgiana Charlotte, b. 1794, m. Lord George Quin, second son of Thomas, Marquess of Headfort. A son, George Thomas, b. 1815. A daughter, Lavinia, b. 1816.
Frederic, b. 1798.
George, b. 1799.
William Spencer, 6th Duke of Devonshire, b. 1790.
Georgiana, b. 1783, m. George, Viscount Morpeth, son of Frederick, Earl of Carlisle. Six sons and five daughters.
Henrietta, b. 1785, m. Granville Leveson Gower, Visc. Granville, son of Granville Leveson, 1st Marquess of Stafford. Issue.
John William, Viscount Duncannon, with many other children, and a numerous posterity.

minded peer expatiates with great fervour on his long and respectful passion, lays his fortune and person at her feet, and implores her hand, to console him for the loss of his deceased wife. *

The reply of the duchess to the duke of Somerset was highly dignified, and worthy of her regard to the memory of her husband. She not only declined a connection so unsuitable at her age, but declared that if she were only thirty, she would not permit even the emperor of the world to succeed in that heart, which had been devoted to John duke of Marlborough. The disappointed peer was so affected with her candour and spirit, as to solicit her advice in the choice of a wife; and to espouse lady Charlotte Finch, whom she recommended. Their friendship continued through life; and the duchess often availed herself of his judgment, in the disposal of money, and the purchase of landed property.

She survived the duke of Marlborough twenty-two years, and died in 1744, at the age of 84.

* Letter from lord Coningsby to the duchess of Marlborough, and Correspondence between her grace and the duke of Somerset.

The letter from lord Coningsby was written in the latter end of 1722, and that from the duke of Somerset, July 17. 1723.

CHAPTER 118.

CHARACTER OF THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH.

The actions and correspondence of the duke of Marlborough furnish the best illustration of his character; but we cannot close a narrative, in the composition of which we have felt no less pleasure than interest, without a few concluding remarks on the leading peculiarities of his mind, as well as on those habits and dispositions, which are least known and least developed.

As a private individual, he possessed the domestic virtues in an eminent degree. He was a dutiful and obedient son, a tender husband, an affectionate father, a firm friend, and an indulgent master. The temper and forbearance which he manifested towards the wayward fancies and petulant humour of his duchess, are almost unexampled; and his indulgence is the more laudable, as we discover few instances in which his conjugal fondness interfered with his political duties. His kindness towards his children is no less shewn, in his invariable attention to their welfare, during their early years; and in his liberality and care for their establishment, in their more mature age. Above all, the highest illustration of his character as a father and husband was, his affectionate caution during the incessant

bickerings, which occurred towards the decline of his life, between his two surviving daughters and their mother, where great blame was justly attributable to both parties, and where he was involved in a continual struggle between inclination and duty. Without belying his affection to either, he was not insensible to their faults and failings; and in his testamentary bequests, evinced his impartiality and liberality to all.

Many proofs might be adduced of the steadiness, as well as warmth of his friendship, but none is more striking, than his invariable attachment to lord Godolphin. Assured of his integrity and abilities, he gave him his whole support, and full confidence; and disdained to sacrifice his faithful colleague, not merely on the trite plea of political expediency, but even for the most weighty considerations of power and emolument. To the fears and prejudices of this zealous and upright, but often narrow-minded statesman, he yielded, what he denied to conjugal importunity, and, in many instances, relinquished his own better judgment to the limited views and suggestions of his friend.

The endowments and virtues of so extraordinary a mind were combined and embellished with no less distinguished graces of person and manner. He was above the middle stature, well formed, and active in bodily exercises. His countenance was unusually pleasing, his features regular, but manly; his eye penetrating and expressive. His demeanor was graceful, dignified, and captivating; and no man possessed, in a higher degree, the art of conciliation. His very denials were tempered

with such gentleness and complacency, that even the applicants who were least satisfied, in regard to the object of their solicitations, could not quit him, without being charmed by his deportment. He was, indeed, a finished courtier; but the polish of his manners was derived rather from nature than from art. It was the operation of inherent humility, united with a sweetness and amenity of temper, which seldom enters into the composition of a hero. This amiable peculiarity was not visible merely in social intercourse, but appears in all his correspondence, and is traced in all his actions. Lord chancellor Cowper, who knew him well, describes him as a master of the most winning address; and lord Chesterfield adduces him as a model of perfection in the art of pleasing. *

He was equally regular and exemplary in the performance of moral and religious duties. The principles, which he had imbibed in his early years, were indelibly impressed on his mind; and in courts and camps, as well as in domestic life, he exhibited the same pious confidence in the protection of an over-ruling Providence. He was a firm believer in the truths of the Christian Revelation, and zealously attached to the doctrines of the Established Church. Hence he was punctual in his attendance on the divine offices, a frequent communicant, and manifested a devotion, fervent, but calm, and no less remote from enthusiasm than from indifference.

Though brought up in a licentious court, and

* Lord Cowper's Diary, and lord Chesterfield's Letters to his Son.

seduced, in his youth, by evil example, he maintained an inviolable respect for the nuptial union. From the time of his marriage with the object of his affections, he resisted every temptation of courts and camps; and, amidst all the calumnious imputations which have been heaped on his memory, the aggravated malice of his political adversaries has never thrown the slightest suspicion on his conjugal fidelity.

The operation of these principles was not only felt in his own conduct, but extended their influence to his family, and to all who were subject to his authority. He was never known to utter an indecent word, or to give an example of levity. He even severely reproved those who presumed to offend his ears with loose expressions, and resented them, both as a personal affront, and as an act of immorality.* He discountenanced the slightest degree of intemperance or licentiousness, and laboured to impress his officers and troops with the same sense of religion which he himself entertained. Divine service was regularly performed in all his fixed camps, both morning and evening; and, on Sundays, sermons were preached, both in field and garrison. Previous to a battle, prayers were offered up at the head of each regiment; and the first act, after a victory, was a solemn thanksgiving. By these means, aided by his own example, "his camp," to use the words of his biographer, who served under him, "resembled a quiet, well-governed city. Cursing and swearing were seldom

* From lord Cobham, who served under him during so many campaigns.

heard among the officers; a sot and a drunkard, was the object of scorn; and the poor soldiers, many of them the refuse and dregs of the nation, became at the close of one or two campaigns, tractable, civil, sensible, and clean, and had an air and spirit above the vulgar." *

A leading feature in the character of the duke of Marlborough, was his generous magnanimity. Sincere himself, he disdained to suspect others; and, in all his actions and correspondence, he manifests that lofty confidence, which is the attribute of elevated minds. A striking instance of this spirit occurs in a letter to the duchess, who, at an early period, had hinted her suspicions of the duke of Shrewsbury. "If he be an ill man," he observes, "he has it in his power to do a great deal of hurt; but I am of the humour not to believe the hundredth part of what is said of any body, so that I may easily be imposed upon." In no case, indeed, was this more strongly exemplified, than in his conduct towards Harley, and in the pertinacity with which he long resisted every proof of the treachery of a man whom he considered as bound to him by gratitude.

Human nature, however, is not perfect; and it is with regret we acknowledge, that one virtue was wanting in the duke of Marlborough, which we naturally attach to the character of a great man. This was, a want of liberality, which, in him, amounted to parsimony. He was thus enabled

* Lediard, vol. i. Preface, p. 20.

to raise a fortune, which few subjects have ever realised, and to render his family no less distinguished for opulence, than for honours. It is but justice, however, to add, that this principle of rigid economy was derived from his originally scanty means, his early marriage, and numerous family, and observed from necessity, till it degenerated into habit. It is no less just to remark, that it operated chiefly in his private capacity; for, in his loans to government, in his buildings and improvements, and in transactions of a public nature, no man was more munificent. Of this assertion, ample proof is derived from the splendid mansions of Holywell and Marlborough houses *, the expensive improvements at Windsor Lodge, and the completion of Blenheim.

But his private qualities, however eminent, were far surpassed by his excellences as a public character. His exploits as a general, have so far monopolized attention, that due justice has not been rendered to his merits as a statesman. In that capacity, however, he occupies a prominent place; for in the cabinet, when unfettered by the views or prejudices of party, he displayed the same skill, discernment, and decision as in the field. On him rested, for several years, the political system, not only of his own country, but of Europe; and the ease with which he appeared to direct the vast and complicated machine, is no less wonderful than his most stupendous victories. In application and

* From a memorandum of the duchess, we learn that Marlborough House alone did not cost him less than £70,000.

industry he was unparalleled; and he was equally master of the minutest details of domestic government, as of the profoundest combinations of policy. Of this, his extensive correspondence, still remaining, is a striking instance, and verifies his own observation, in one of his letters to lord Oxford, that the pen was seldom out of his hand. Indeed, when we contemplate the vast mass of his official and private letters, we can scarcely believe, that the same hand and mind which directed the military and political energies of Europe, could have been equal to the mere mechanical labour of such incessant drudgery. It would be an endless task, to review the details of his conduct as a statesman; but the preceding pages will exhibit innumerable instances, to contrast his sound sense, enlarged views, and able policy, with the petty interests of the dutch and austrian governments, and even the narrow views of his own cabinet.

As a senator, his conduct was marked by manly integrity and spirit, tempered with caution and prudence. He took little share in discussions, which were beyond the sphere of his knowledge or practice; but on subjects of foreign and military policy, his opinions were heard with the greatest attention, and produced a decisive effect. He was not a frequent speaker; but his manner evinced peculiar dignity and courtesy; his language was simple and forcible, his matter well arranged, and his arguments perspicuous and conclusive. He did not affect the graces of oratory; yet, when warmed with his subject, his language

breathed a degree of feeling and energy beyond the reach of art.

We should be happy to exhibit his political career as free from blemish, but it is not without regret, that we revert to his clandestine correspondence with the exiled family, to whose expulsion he so much contributed. Though some palliation might be drawn from example, circumstances, and personal considerations, and though we are convinced that his overtures were merely amusive; it is a duplicity, which we must unequivocally condemn, and a blot in an escutcheon, otherwise so honourably distinguished. But it would be no less uncharitable than impolitic, to drag such failings into light, when they are so fully redeemed by a long series of able counsels and splendid achievements, for the liberties and religion of his country, and for the welfare and independence of Europe. The citizens of Rome did not reject the appeal of Scipio to his victories; and, if we judge the duke of Marlborough by actions, not by words, he must stand excused by every feeling of candour and patriotism.

As a warrior, the merits of the duke of Marlborough, though uncontested, have never been sufficiently developed. Little favoured by education and science, he supplied the want of knowledge by observation and reflection. He fully profited by his brief experience, under so able a master as Turenne; and, after a short campaign in the Netherlands, and the uncontrolled direction of a petty expedition to Ireland, he rose at once a

general, and in his first operations, proved himself equal, if not superior, to the ablest of his contemporaries. With limited, and often inadequate means, he accomplished the greatest objects; infused harmony, union, and strength into a heterogeneous mass of different nations; and might have stood still higher in the ranks of fame, had he not been harassed by the petty passions of those with whom he was connected in command, and thwarted by the partial interests, and limited views, of the powers whose advantage he was labouring to promote. With all these obstructions, however, he may claim the merit of having humbled France in the height of her power, and routed her disciplined armies; of having gained every battle in which he engaged, and reduced every fortress which he undertook to besiege.

His genius was of English mould, vast, comprehensive, and daring, attaining its purposes by great and decided efforts, simple in design, and majestic in execution.

Averse, by character as well as principle, from defensive warfare, he was always the assailant, and invariably pursued one grand object, regardless of minor considerations. He conquered, not by chance, or the unskilfulness of his antagonists; but by superior vigilance and activity, by the profoundness of his combinations, by the celerity of his movements, and by the promptitude and decision of his attacks. These qualities are fully exemplified in every part of his military career; but more particularly in his march to the

Danube, his operations on the Moselle, his battles of Blenheim, Ramilies, and Oudenard, and, above all, in his fine campaign of 1711.

He possessed a perfect knowledge of ground, and consummate skill in the choice of positions. He was also well acquainted with the character and spirit of his troops; and the familiar appellation of "corporal John," as well as the reliance they invariably expressed on his vigilance and care, evince the love and confidence with which he inspired them.

With these sublime qualities of a great commander, he united endurance of fatigue and hardship, the most perfect presence of mind, and inexhaustible fertility of resource. He was, at the same time, patient under contradiction, and placid both in manners and deportment; and the harmony in which he acted with his colleague, Eugene, proves, at once, the liberality of his sentiments, and his freedom from the spirit of rivalry and competition. But no feature in his character was more shining and conspicuous than his humanity. Not only the troops who had promoted his glory, and shared his dangers, but the enemy whom his sword had spared, invariably experienced his sympathy and benevolence. He was feared as a general, but he was loved as a man. No one was more alive to the sufferings and privations of his troops; nor did any conqueror more sincerely feel for the horrors and devastation of war. He frequently gave the weary soldier a place in his coach; and after the most desperate battles, his earliest

care was to visit the field, to comfort the wounded, and to lighten the sufferings of misfortune and captivity.

A leading feature in his character, both public and private, was his unparalleled self-possession, though, as we have before seen, he had to struggle against a temper naturally ardent and irritable. Indeed, in him, this virtue is so conspicuous, that he has been adduced by Adam Smith as a striking example, in illustration of his Theory of Moral Sentiments. After adverting to the overweening vanity of the great and wise, in different ages, he adds:

"The religion and manners of modern times give our great men little encouragement to fancy themselves gods, or even prophets. Success, however, joined to great popular favour, has often so far turned the heads of them, as to make them ascribe to themselves, both an importance and an ability, much beyond what they really possessed; and by this presumption, to precipitate themselves into many rash, and even ruinous adventures. It is a characteristic, almost peculiar to the great duke of Marlborough, that ten years of such uninterrupted and such splendid successes, as scarce any other general could boast of, never betrayed him into a single rash action, scarce into a single rash word or expression. The same temperate coolness and self-command cannot, I think, be ascribed to any other great warrior of later times; not to prince Eugene, nor to the late king of Prussia; not to the great prince of Condé, not

even to Gustavus Adolphus. Turenne seems to have approached the nearest to it, but several different actions of his life, sufficiently demonstrate that it was in him by no means so perfect, as in the great duke of Marlborough." *

Finally, the best proof of transcendent merit is the testimony of an enemy, and this testimony is not wanting. For when the heat of party resentment had subsided, his inveterate persecutor, lord Bolingbroke, paid a public and dignified tribute to his memory, in his Letters on the Study of History.

" By his (king William's) death, the duke of Marlborough was raised to the head of the army, and, indeed, of the confederacy, where he, a private man, a subject, obtained by merit, and by management, a more deciding influence than high birth, confirmed authority, and even the crown of Great Britain had given to king William. Not only all the parts of that vast machine, the grand alliance, were kept more compact and entire, but a more rapid and vigorous motion was given to the whole; and, instead of languishing or disastrous campaigns, we saw every scene of the war full of action. All those wherein he appeared, and many of those wherein he was not then an actor, but abettor, however, of their action, were crowned with the most triumphant success. I take, with pleasure, this opportunity of doing justice to that great man, whose faults I knew, and whose virtues I admired; and whose memory, AS THE GREATEST GENERAL,

* Theory of Moral Sentiments, chap. iv. on the Character of Virtue, vol. ii. p. 158.

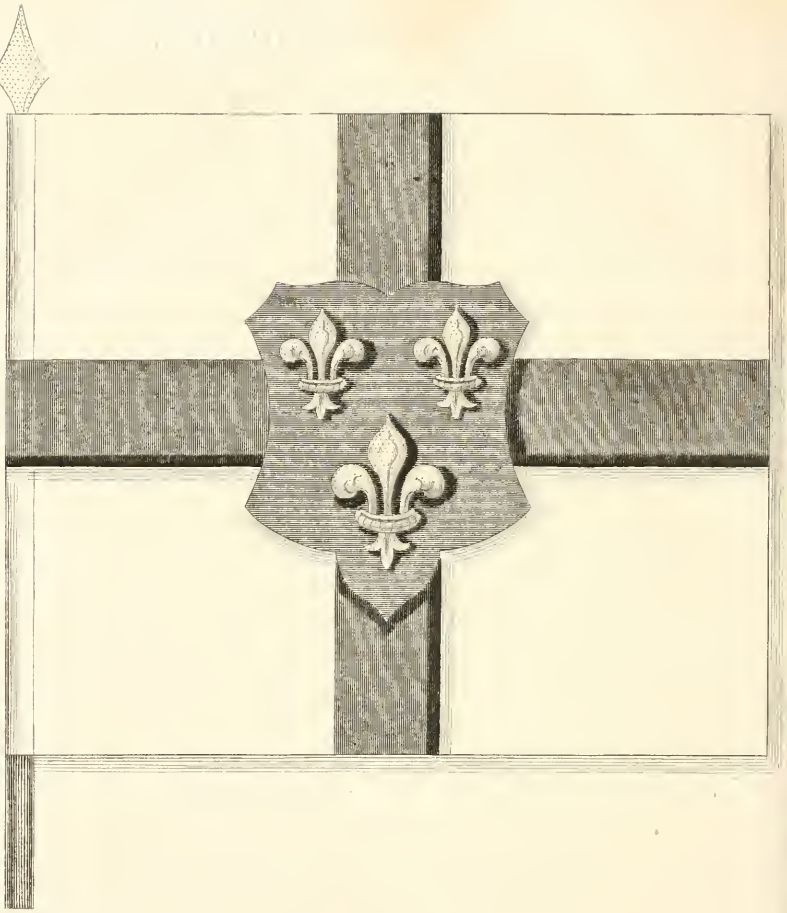
AND AS THE GREATEST MINISTER that our country or any other has produced, I honour." *

* This character of the duke of Marlborough was not printed till after the death of lord Bolingbroke; though it was submitted to the duchess, at her request, as we find from a letter in the hand-writing of Mr. Mallet.

" Your grace will find, in the next leaf, that character you was pleased to desire a sight of some time ago. As the book from whence it is taken has not yet appeared, your grace will be so good as to let it lie by you, without shewing it; and you will have the satisfaction to know, that this character, never intended for your grace's perusal, is without partiality or flattery. I have the honour to be, with the greatest regard, &c.

" *Strand on the Green, Friday.*"

The signature is torn off, apparently by the duchess, to conceal the name of the writer.



The Standard belonging to the Honour and Manor of Woodstock borne at the Funeral of His Grace John Duke of Marlborough.

APPENDIX.

Copy of the Royal Warrant of his Majesty King George the First, relative to the Standard *or* Colours, *belonging to the Honour and Manor of* Woodstock, *to be borne at the Funeral of his Grace* John Duke of Marlborough.

GEORGE R.

WHEREAS in and by an Act of Parliament made in the 3d and 4th years of the reign of our late dear sister Queen Anne, in respect of the eminent and unparalleled services performed by the most noble John Duke of Marlborough, now lately deceased, and, among others, in particular for attacking and forcing the Bavarians, assisted by the French, in their strong intrenchment at Schellenberg, and for gaining a glorious victory over the enemies, reinforced by a royal army of the French King's best troops, commanded by a Marshal of France, at or near Blenheim, on the 2d of August, 1704; it was enacted, in order to perpetuate the memory of such signal services, that the said late Queen might, by Letters Patent, grant to the said Duke, his Heirs and Assigns, the Honour and Manor of Woodstock, and other Lands therein mentioned, to be held of the Crown, in Fee and Common Soccage by Fealty, rendering on the 2d of August in every year for ever, one Standard or Colour of three Flower de Luces painted thereupon, in pursuance whereof, her said late Majesty granted Letters Patent accordingly.

And though the said Act fully intimates that the said Standard or Colours shall be annually presented for ever on the 2d day of August, in order to perpetuate the memory of that glorious victory, obtained over the then enemies, reinforced by a royal army of the French King's troops, on the 2d day of August; yet, in regard, the said Act and the said Letters Patent thereon,

do not direct the Blazon of the said Fleurs de Lis, or on what Field they shall be borne, you, our Principal King of Arms, have, as we are informed, humbly requested our commands in that particular. We being desirous that the Funeral of the said Duke should be solemnized with all the circumstances of honour that his high merits have deserved, do hereby signify our will and pleasure, and direct and command you, that in the said Funeral you shall set forth the said Standard or Colours of the three Fleurs de Lis in the following method, that is to say, Azure three Fleurs de Lis Or, in a Shield, placed by way of an Inescutcheon on the Cross of St. George, according to the Draught hereunto annexed, to be borne either in a Shield, Standard, or Banner, as belonging to the Honour and Manor of Woodstock.

At which said Funeral, you are also to use, or caused to be used, all such Ensigns that appertain to the said late deceased Duke, as a Prince of the Sacred Roman Empire, together with the Banner of the Garter, which, instead of the Images of Saints, we hereby appoint and direct, shall be the Cross of the said Order, impaling the arms of the said late Duke, with an Inescutcheon thereon of the Arms of the Duchess, all surrounded with a Garter, and surmounted with a Ducal Coronet; all which said Ensigns are to be used and borne, as well within the verge of our Court, as in all other places at the solemnization of the said Funeral, wherein John Duke of Montagu, the Chief Mourner, is to be supported by Scroop Duke of Bridgewater and the Earl of Godolphin, any former Orders or Rules given about Funerals notwithstanding.

And forasmuch as by another Act of Parliament, passed in the 5th year of the said late Queen, it was further enacted that the Honours and Dignities of the said most noble Duke of Marlborough be settled upon all his Posterity, in the manner therein mentioned, and that the Honour and Manor of Woodstock, the House of Blenheim, with other Lands, be annexed and go along with the said Honours and Dignities; it is our will and pleasure, and we hereby direct and command you, and your Successors in the office of our Garter Principal King of Arms, at all times, and all proper occasions, to set forth and blazon the Standard or Colours belonging to the Honour and Manor of Woodstock in the form above-mentioned.

And for all these purposes this shall be to you and them a sufficient Warrant. Given at our Court at Kensington, the 19th day of July, 1722, in the eighth year of our Reign.

By His Majesty's Command.

(*Signed*) CARTERET.

To our Trusty and Well-beloved John Anstis, Esquire, Garter Principal King of Arms, and to his Successors in that Office.

The above is a true Copy of the original Warrant, now remaining among the Archives of the College of Arms, London, and examined therewith by me,

(*Signed*) GEORGE NAYLER, York Herald.

Genealogist of the Bath.

Herald's College, London,
June 30. 1818.

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